



A WEDDING

by

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&

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A WEDDING

FADE IN:

EXTREME CLOSE SHOT - WHITE SYRINGE

The FINGERS of a hand gently close around the bulb of the syringe. CAMERA PANS slowly down the slender nozzle to its tip. In SLOW MOTION we follow the tip of the syringe as it inches ever closer to the tail feathers of a tethered WHITE DOVE. As the long, slender nozzle slides into the squawking bird's rectum, the hand squeezes the bulb of the syringe with a loud SLURP, and we FREEZE FRAME for our MAIN TITLE.

"A WEDDING"

WE HEAR the tolling of church bells, as we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHICAGO SKYLINE - A JUNE DAY

CAMERA PANS DOWN and ZOOMS in on a giant gothic, Episcopal cathedral. Several long black limousines are parked in front of the church, each manned by a formally attired chauffeur. CAMERA CONTINUES ZOOM to the entrance of the cathedral. A black suited SECURITY MAN (JEFF KUYKENDALL) stands by the door, holding it slightly ajar, and peering inside the church. We HEAR the ORGAN and CHOIR MUSIC from within. He speaks into a military PORTO-PHONE slung over his shoulder, describing what he sees in clipped hushed tones.

KUYKENDALL

We've got both families in the church now. The ushers are starting to seat the relatives. We should be getting underway in ten to fifteen minutes.

INT. MANSION - UPSTAIRS

At the top of the staircase, on a landing which overlooks the main ballroom,

in center sweater

a formally attired black HOUSEMAN (RANDOLPH) listens on the phone. Standing beside him is a young uniformed NURSE (JANET SCHULMAN). We are aware of the buzz of activity downstairs - hurried last minute preparations for a lavish wedding reception.

RANDOLPH
(into phone)
Let me relay that information.
(to the nurse)
Most of the family members are seated. The ceremony will start in approximately...five minutes.

NURSE
I'll tell her. Thank you, Randolph.

INT. BEDROOM

NETTIE VOGELSANG, an elderly matriarch, lies propped up by pillows in a huge four-poster bed. She reacts to the knocking impatiently.

NETTIE
Stop wasting time, Janet. Come in here and tell me what's going on.

The NURSE enters.

NETTIE
Has it started yet?

NURSE
Any moment now. They've just gotten everyone seated.

NETTIE
Seated? Well, how long does that take, for Lord sakes?
NURSE
There's a lot of protocol to follow in a formal wedding, Mrs. Vogelsang.

NETTIE
Horse pucky, that's what it is. I'm trying to get my granddaughter married. Not crown a king.

I'm trying to get my grand daughter married not crown a king.

NURSE
It's your grand son.

NETTIE
That's what I meant. Now, go on.
Go on. I want to know what they're
doing.

NURSE
Alright, Mrs. Vogelsang. But I
want you to relax, and try to
get some...

NETTIE
I'll relax when it's over and done
with. Not before. ~~Now, shoo.~~
Shoo.

The NURSE turns to leave. NETTIE calls after her.

NETTIE
What about the photographs? Have
they got one? I want pictures of
this, you know.

NURSE
You don't have to worry about that.
Miss Billingsly hired professional
film people to photograph the whole
ceremony.

NETTIE
Film people. Protocol. Horse pucky.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Ribboned and flowered for a very grand, formal wedding, as we meet
the principals in a series of CUTS spanning the entire ceremony.
They will be identified for us by,

Female
THE FILMMAKERS (producer, cameraman, female sound technician), who have
set up their 16mm equipment to the side of the main altar, facing the
congregation. The PRODUCER, somewhat harried, instructs ~~her~~ CAMERAMAN
whom to photograph, frantically trying to locate their names and
relationships from a handful of typed lists. During this action,

the two of them will get their signals crossed, become confused, even argue, all the while remarking and making cracks about the different sizes, shapes, styles of dress and peculiarities of their subjects. Through this running commentary we will identify and learn something about our people, as we see them.

The People We See:

REEDLEY ~~EXISTENT~~ *Roots*

The head usher. A straight-backed faculty member from the groom's military academy - conspicuous in his ~~shiny buttoned, emerald green and white~~ academy dress uniform, escorting:

REGINA VOGELSANG DUARDE

Mother of the groom, regally ~~gowned in blue velvet, a single strand of matched pearls around her neck.~~ We sense an elusive, dreamlike quality in her bearing and smile, as she is led to her seat in the left front pew. Seated behind her is:

BEATRICE SLOAN CORY

Her aunt. A widowed matriarch in her *seventies - she's a* ~~fifties, bejeweled and perspiring.~~ *Connie.*

VICTORIA CORY DORAN

- her grand daughter - tall
~~Quite stunning in spite of her rather heavy-handed make-up...at the moment trying very hard to settle down her two fideoty daughters seated beside her, ALBISON DORAN (11) and PIERRE DORAN (3) maintaining throughout, an unwavering smile of repose.~~
The ultimate snob.

CLARICE VOGELSANG

Regina's younger sister. At 40, the only 'maiden' of the family; starry-eyed, wispy, blonde. We just might detect a glimmer of underlying hysteria, perhaps in the way she constantly touches her perfectly coiffed hair, as though checking to see if something - anything, might be out of place.

ANTOINETTE VOGELSANG GODDARD

Regina's older sister. Stylish, regal - exuding self-esteem, quite lovely in a wintry way. She is a prominent Palm Beach socialite with blood the color of the sky. ~~Next to her is~~ *if Paul Newman adds blue to his eyes "Toni" adds it to her blood. next to her is:*

DR. JULES WEICHA

Physician and long time friend of the groom's family. (NOTE: His presence and identity among the immediate family members will cause our filmmakers their worst moment of bewilderment.)

An Usher proceeds up the aisle.

HUGH (HUGHIE) BRENNER

The bride's 19 year old borthter. We will sense his extreme shyness and perhaps even a glint of the paralyzing fear he has of public gatherings. Hughie is an epileptic. He is escorting his mother:

"Tulip"

SUSAN ANNE RUTLEDGE BRENNER

Looking very proper and proud in her frilly ~~pink~~ dress. She has a scrubbed, rural attractiveness. We might also detect a slight, self-consciousness in her smile, as she takes her place in the right front pew, sitting next to:

DAVID RUTELEDGE

An ordained Baptist minister and Susan's broghter. Large boned and gangly, conspicuously underdressed in a plain brown suit and black string tie. Directly behind him, four of his children:

RACHEL RUTELEDGE (4), MATTHEW RUTELEDGE (6), MARK RUTELEDGE (8), JOHN RUTELEDGE (11). They are well mannered, bright eyed kids, obviously able to take care of themselves. Seated next to them is:

ELEANOR BRENNER SPAR

Their aunt from New Jersey - not what you would call a ravishing beauty, perhaps even a little hard around the edges, but right now, at her best, relsihing every moment of this interlude with the elite.

ANGLE - BACK OF CHURCH

The FILMMAKERS notice that the WEDDING PARTY is assembling at the back of the church, and quickly turn their camera toward them. It is here that they discover and remark about:

JEFF KUYKENMALL

The uniformed security chief, who is speaking into his PORTOPHONE, as he peers inside the church.

INT. BEDROOM

NETTIE'S eyes flutter open, suddenly alert, as the NURSE enters, carrying a tray of food.

NETTIE

Well, it's about time. Is it over?

NURSE

It won't be long now. The processional is just starting.
(setting tray down)

NETTIE

The processional! Young lady, you get that Bishop Martin on the phone and tell him I said to stop all this foolishness and get to the ceremony.
(reacting to food)
I'm not hungry.

NURSE

Well, you've got to eat something. Dr. Meecham gave me strict orders before he left.

NETTIE

Dr. Meecham is an ~~old fool~~. Now get that food out of here. I'm not going to eat a bite, and I'm not going to *do any thing* ~~relax~~ until this ~~silly~~ wedding is over and done with.

INT. CHURCH

THE FILMMAKERS continue their running commentary, identifying our people for us. As the ORGAN MUSIC signals the processional:

BISHOP ANDREW MARTIN

Resplendent in his magenta vestments, mounts the chancel steps and turns to face the congregation. Bishop Martin, is an ancient relic of a man still pleased with the sound of his own voice.

THE USHERS we have not seen before, as they approach in the processional are:

EDWARD CLINTON

A rangy, twenty year old *Harvard law* *who grew up* ~~seminary~~ student and ~~part-time~~ *worker* at the groom's house, where his mother is the cook.

WILL FARRELL

A handsome, ~~'most eligible'~~ third year honor student at Harvard Law School.

MACKENZIE GODDARD

Antoinette's husband. A giant of a man. Philanthropist and art collector...Mr. Palm Beach.

RUSSELL GERASCH

A reluctant, last minute addition to the wedding party whose wife is a bridesmaid. Russell is a young hulking trucker from Louisville, hopelessly out of place.

BUNKY LEMAY

A chunky, rosy cheeked 17 year old underclassman from the groom's military academy - the school 'mark' - delighted to be invited anywhere - anytime.

The Bridesmaids:

CANDICE (CANDY) RUTELEDGE

David Ruteledge's wife, petite bright eyed and seven months pregnant.

~~SHELBY HUNTER~~

~~The bride's best friend from Louisville, fighting off a serious attack of the giggles.~~

RUTHIE GERASCH

The trucker's wife, grimly intent on making it up the aisle in her high heels - without incident.

Best ~~Shelley Hunkler~~
~~ANN FEDEROTTI~~

Ruthie

A well-endowed friend of ~~the bride~~, travelling for the first time in her life, without her husband. We might even catch her fantasizing at this very moment.

ARIANE DUARDE

The groom's twin sister, whose pinched face gives us a hint of her displeasure at being forced into attendance.

Ami ~~Ruby~~
~~KATIN SPAR~~

(28 years old)

Eleanor Spar's daughter, the bride's cousin, who never saw anything like this in New Jersey.

LUKE RUTELEDGE (9) and KIMBERLY DORAN (9)

The ring bearer and flower girl. (NOTE: At this point, the V.O. patter of the filmmakers will cease, and we will meet our other principals in a series of CUTS from the wedding ceremony.)

The maid of honor takes the bridal bouquet. This is:

BUFFY BRENNER

The bride's older sister. We will detect a slightly irreverent twinkle in her eyes.

The father of the bride steps forward to give his daughter away. This is:

LIAM (SNOOKS) BRENNER

A ruddy, angular man, looking slightly pinched in his maroon tuxedo as he pulls at the collar of his pink, ruffled shirt.

The best man takes the ring from the ring-bearer. This is:

LOUIS DUARDE

Father of the groom, who looks like he could have been an Italian matinee idol. A striking figure in his formal cutaway, his classic features set in an enigmatic, Mona Lisa smile - which betrays nothing.

The groom slips the ring on his bride's finger. This is:

DINO DUARDE

A 20 year old Botticelli version of his father.

The bride accepts her final vow, "I do." This is:

MUFFIN BRENNER

A beautiful, demure, 20 year old 'picture-book bride' in a sea of white lace.

As the Bishop pronounces them man and wife, the RECESSIONAL MUSIC swells. DINO lifts the veil from his bride's face, and the NEWLEYWEDS share their first kiss.

BACK OF THE CHURCH

At the door, the SECURITY CHIEF purrs into the porto-phone.

CHIEF KUYKENDALL

~~It's official now.~~

The knot's been tied.

INT. MANSION - UPSTAIRS

RANDOLPH, listening on the phone, turns to the NURSE.

RANDOLPH

It's over. They're married.

Smiling, she gives him the "A Okay" sign, and heads down the hall.

INT. BEDROOM

The NURSE enters.

NURSE

Congratulations, Mrs. Vogelsang.
Your grandson is married.

NETTIE

You're sure, now? No mistake
about it?

married - is it True

NURSE

Absolutely ~~sure~~. The ~~ceremony~~ *wedding* is
over. *True*

She exits.

NETTIE

...Thank God.

Nettie's eyes flutter...then close.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Sounds of the triumphal RECESSIONAL MUSIC fill the air, as groups of well wishers cluster around the steps of the giant cathedral waiting for a glimpse of the bride and groom. The SECURITY CHIEF stands by on the chauffeured limousines, now holding a WALKIE-TALKIE, scanning the crowd through his steel rimmed glasses. As the NEWLYWEDS rush from the cathedral, grinning through a deluge of thrown rice, the security chief crackles into his walkie-talkie, "This is Getaway." Immediately,

four well rehearsed uniformed security men join hands to cordon off the most rambunctious wellwishers, allowing the Chief to usher bride and groom into the back seat of the limo. (Climbing in beside them, he purrs into the walkie-talkie, "Bride and groom, comin' home." The limousine swings away from the curb.

Our CREDITS continue, as the CAMERA FOLLOWS the limousine north on the Kennedy Interstate, then SPEEDS ON AHEAD of it, while city blends to suburbs and finally, to the wooded lake-side manors. CREDITS END as our CAMERA SINGELS OUT the stately DUARDE family MANSION. Uniformed parking attendants mill about the circular driveway, where, off to the side, we see the newlyweds' car, a shiny WHITE MUSTANG decorated with ribbons and flowers. The huge columns of the house are braided with strands of white blossoms. CAMERA ZOOMS in on the elaborately flowered archway surrounding the front doors.

INT. MANSION - DAY

The luxurious main room of the mansion is a scene of bedlam. MUSICIANS are tuning up, UNIFORMED SERVANTS scurry about with last minute preparations for the reception, tempers flare as people shout over the din. Trying to make sense out of it all is RITA BILLINGSLEY (referred to as RITA), the stunning and very chic wedding coordinator who is currently trying to mediate an argument between the florist, PHILLIP MOSS and the 'dove-lady', MELBA LEAR, who is perched on a ladder, opening the top of the 14 foot wedding cake. Phillip, at wits end, stands by the cake table gesturing at the CAGES OF WHITE DOVES all around him.

PHILLIP

I mean, really...how can I possibly do something beautiful with white rose petals if I have to worry about bird poo poo!

MELBA

They've all had their enemas, Mr. Moss.

PHILLIP recoils. RITA goes to him and pats him on the cheek.

RITA

There, you see. There's nothing to worry about, Phillip. Now be a dear and finish up...They'll be arriving any moment...It's going to be lovely.

Before Phillip can respond, RITA is already in motion, speaking on the move.

RITA
And Mellen, dear, you will do something with those cages.

As RITA moves through the room, alerting everyone to take their places, voicing cheery encouragements, ~~SE~~ HELLSTROM (the caterer) calls her over. Mae, a stunning, middle aged woman, is in obvious discomfort with a serious attack of the flu.

MAE
Rita, I must speak to you.

RITA
Feeling better, dear?

MAE
I feel dreadful. I'm burning up with fever and my head is just pounding.

RITA
Well, you look wonderful. No one will ever know.

MAE
Rita, I really don't think I'm going to be able to make it through the day.

RITA
Oh, Mae, don't even think those thoughts. We couldn't possibly survive without you.

MAE
There's very little left to do. The food's prepared, and Oscar is perfectly capable of...

RITA
Wait. Wait. I have just the thing for you.
(takes out small pill box)

RITA (con't)
These are magical. Believe me,
they'll cure anything.
(hand her pill)
Here, take one right now and I
promise you, you'll feel better
instantly.

MAE
What is it?

RITA
It's uh...Oh, I can't recall the
name, but they've saved my life
many times. You'll adore them.
(hands her a glass of champagne)
Here. Wash it down with this.

MAE swallows the pill. RITA turns to go, but is intercepted by a
SERVING GIRL who hands her a large sheaf of telegrams.

~~SERVING GIRL~~
More telegrams, Miss Billingsly.
There must be close to three
hundred now.

RITA leafs through them, frowning.

RITA
Good heavens, that's over half.
I've never heard of such an attrition
rate.
(then suddenly handing them back)
No. I don't want to see them.
Don't even show them to me.

She continues on toward the kitchen area, speaking to the room.

RITA
...It's going to be lovely.

INT. KITCHEN

The kitchen staff preparing for the elaborate buffet luncheon:
OSCAR EDWARDS, the black chef, ELIZABETH (LIBBY) CLINTON, the
Duarde family's Irish cook, ~~FRANK HARNEY, the Duarde's black butler,~~
~~and various other help.~~

OSCAR

Doesn't make any sense. Askin'
someone to work when they're
that sick.

FRANK

I told Miss Billingsly. But she
didn't want to hear about it.

LIBBY

(grumbling to herself)
Hoighty, toighty. Hoighty,
toighty.

RITA breezes in.

RITA

Oh, there you are, Frank. We need
you at the door. Post haste.

FRANK

Just on my way.

FRANK starts to leave.

RITA

The uniform looks smashing, Frank.

Frank acknowledges the compliment on his way out.

OSCAR

Miss Billingsly, why don't you
let me take care of the buffet
for Miss Hellstrom. I've done it
before. It's no big deal.

RITA
Don't be silly, Oscar. Ms
Hellstrom's the top cateress
in the business. It would be
foolish for us not to use her
talents.

OSCAR
But she's sick.

RITA
Don't worry about Ms. Hellstrom.
She's a trooper. She's going to
be just fine.

OSCAR
She's running a high fev---

RITA
Oscar, please, please, please.
We all have our responsibilities
today. Yours is the food...and
I know it's going to be lovely.

She breezes out.

LIBBY
Hoighty, toighty. Hoighty, toighty.

INT. MAIN ROOM

RITA enters from the kitchen area. PHILLIP MOSS (florist) flits
back and forth giving nervous instructions to several of the servants,
as they position the flowered lattice pieces which will serve as
backdrops for the wedding pictures and receiving lines. As RITA
passes by, she calls out:

RITA
Verna? Has anyone seen Verna?

She is given several different answers, before VERNA HARNEY, the
Duardes' black maid (Frank's wife) comes to her.

RITA
Ah, there you are, Verna. I
thought I'd lost you.

VERNA
I was in the gift display room
making sure they find a place
to hide all the duplications.

RITA

When you get a chance, Verna,
bring Ms. Hellstrom a cup of
hot tea with lemon. She's probably
out by the buffet tent.
(again, the pill box)
And make sure she takes one of these.

She hands Verna a pill and continues on.

VERNA

Yes, mamm.

ANGLE - TOP OF THE STAIRS

THE NURSE appears at the top of the staircase, a look of concern
on her face as she scans the room. Descending the stairs, she
hurries over to RITA.

NURSE

Miss Billingsly, may I talk
to you for a moment.

RITA

Of course, dear. What is it?
(then, to a serving girl over
her shoulder)
We can start pouring the champagne
now.

NURSE

Miss Billingsly, Mrs. Vogelsang
just passed away.

RITA

Yes, de...I beg your pardon.

NURSE

Mrs. Vogelsang. She's dead.
I just left the room for a moment,
and when I came back...

RITA waves her hands in front of her face in a frantic attempt to erase
the image.

RITA
Please. Please. Please. You
mustn't. I don't want to hear
this. It doesn't concern me.

The nurse tries to continue, but RITA will have none of it.

RITA
No. No. No. Don't tell me.
Tell the doctor...Someone...

Before the nurse can get a word out, RITA glides off, mumbling to herself. As she enters the LONG HALLWAY off the main room, she is intercepted by MILDRED HAYNES, an anemic looking woman in a full length gown.

MILDRED
Miss Billingsly, I'm thinking
of making some changes in my program.

RITA
(a bit muddled)
What?...I'm sorry...Who are you?

MILDRED
Mildred Haynes...the pianist.

RITA
Oh, of course you are. Forgive me,
dear Mildred. What changes are we
talking about?

MILDRED
Well, it just occurred to me that
the Brahms might be a little too...
too funereal in tone.

RITA
Good Lord!

MILDRED
So I thought I'd start with some
Chopin. It's brighter and...

RITA
Yes. Yes. By all means. We
must keep it bright. Chopin
sounds lovely, dear.

She continues down the hallway.

INT. MAIN ROOM

In a corner of the room, the NURSE and RANDOLPH converse in hushed tones.

NURSE

...I don't know what I should
do, Randolph.

RANDOLPH

Well, there's nothing we can do
until Mr. Duarde returns.
He must be the first to know.

NURSE

But Dr. Meeham should be notified
immediately.

RANDOLPH

Don't worry. The doctor will
know in due time. Just wait
upstairs as though nothing had
happened. I assure you Mr. Duarde
will take care of everything.

INT. HALLWAY

RITA stands in the doorway to the 'gift room' where a bevy of SERVANTS feverishly unpack, number and arrange the wedding gifts on four large, white linen covered display tables. It is a veritable treasure chest of crystal, silver and every electrical appliance known to man. One of the servants wants to know what to do with the checks sent to the newlyweds. RITA instructs her to display them with the other gifts, but to make sure the amounts are not visible.

CHARLES DESMOND, the still photographer, approaches her, accompanied by two servants lugging his heavy equipment. RITA greets him, inquiring about the wedding party. He tells her the limos are just arriving.

He will set up for the photographs, but complains that he cannot do his work if the filmmaking crew will be running around and getting in his way. She assures him she will talk to them.

RITA arrives at the MAIN ENTRY (a spacious rotunda with a staircase off to the side) just in time to greet bride and groom. She embraces DINO and MUFFIN gushing over the bride's loveliness. NOTE: In the background we might overhear the SECURITY CHIEF speaking into his WALKIE TALKIE, as he deploys his men around the estate in strict, military jargon. DINO takes MUFFIN off to meet 'Libby'.

PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS trickle in:

LOUIS and REGINA DUARDE, greeted lavishly by RITA. Their daughter ARIANE (a bridesmaid), still pouting. CLARICE VOGELSANG (Regina's younger sister) takes RITA aside, asking her if any more guests have sent 'regrets' wires. RITA tries to brush it aside, but Clarice will not be put off and leaves to have a look at the telegrams.

BEATRICE SLOAN CORY (the aunt), her daughter, VICTORIA CORY DORAN and her three daughters (ALLISON, DIERDRE and KIMBERLY). MRS. CORY refuses to sign the guest book, "in my own sister's house? Rubbish!", and heads for the reception room. Victoria follows. Her daughters scramble up the rotunda staircase, ignoring their mother's protests.

INT. KITCHEN - DINO, MUFFIN, LIBBY, (OSCAR and OTHER HELP), DINO, presents MUFFIN to LIBBY. Libby fusses over her, and imparts some motherly advice to her 'little pup's' bride, while Dino gobbles up his favorite snack, a hot dog with kraut.

INT. MAIN ENTRY

REGINA introduces RITA to her sister from Palm Beach, ANTOINETTE VOGELSANG GODDARD and her husband MACKENZIE.

ANTOINETTE

It's a pleasure. You did the
Langley wedding at the Plaza
last season, and Jane told me
you were an absolute genius.

LOUIS takes over the introductions, as the bride's family arrives:

LIAM (SNOOKS) BRENNER, his wife, SUSAN ANNE, their other daughter, BUFFY (Maid of Honor), and ELEANOR BRENNER SPAR. Mrs. Brenner is dazzled by the home.

MRS. BRENNER

I've never in my life seen anything
so beautiful, Mr. Duarde.

LOUIS

(putting his arm around her)
Please, my dear Susan. It's Louis.
You're family now.

THE BRIDESMAIDS arrive (AMY McDERMOTT, SHELBY MUNKER, RUTHIE GERASCH and KATHY SPAR) in a din of excited chatter. SHELBY makes a beeline for the 'gift display room', announcing that she'll meet the others after a peek at the 'loot'. The OTHER GIRLS rush off to freshen up for the photos. ARIANNE follows reluctantly. When BUFFY BRENNER moves to join the other bridesmaids, MR. BRENNER stops her.

MR. BRENNER

Wait a second. Don't I get some
sugar?

BUFFY runs into his arms, and MR. BRENNER gives her a crushing, spinning, anything but fatherly embrace that causes some 'raised eyebrows' from the Duarde clan.

MR. BRENNER

(releasing his daughter)
Okay, Princess...That'll hold me
for awhile.

A grinning BUFFY rushes after the other bridesmaids.

DR. JULES MEECIAM ambles in, followed by the bride's uncle, DAVID RUTELEDGE (the Baptist Minister), his pregnant wife, CANDICE (a bridesmaid), and their children: RACHIEL, MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN. They greet the Brenners', then MRS. BRENNER proudly introduces them to Louis and Regina. REGINA, in turn, introduces the Minister's family to her sister.

REGINA
(referring to the children)
Isn't that sweet, Tony?
Just like the books of the Bible.

ANTOINETTE
...Charming...Come along, Mac.

She and her husband exit abruptly, heading toward the main room.

UPSTAIRS ROOM
AMY McDERMOTT, RUTHIE GERASCH, BUFFY BRENNER, ARIANEE, KATHY SPAR,
and MUFFIN.

Much hugging, kissing and squealing, as the girls open their
'bridesmaids' gifts (bracelets) and embrace the new 'Mrs. Duarde'.
ARIANNE primps at the dressing table. MUFFIN helps KATHY SPAR
with her bracelet, then moves to her sister.

MUFFIN
I hope you like it.

BUFFY
I love it.

MUFFIN
Yours is special. It's got three
charms.

BUFFY
Terrific.
(then, to Arianne)
You about through, Arianne?
There's only one mirror, you know.

ARIANNE
Not yet.

BUFFY
Terrific.

AMY embraces MUFFIN.

AMY
It's gorgeous, MUFFIN. I
just love it.

MUFFIN
I'm glad, sugar pie. Wait'll
you see what Dino gave me.

She takes a strand of pearls from a box.

RUTHIE
(massaging her feet)
Jesus, I can't feel my toes. I
think I'm paralyzed.

MUFFIN
(displaying the pearls)
What do you think?

AMY
Ooooooh. Oh, MUFFIN!

MUFFIN
They're for real. Matched pearls.

KATHY stand behind ARIANNE,
using the mirror as she
arranges her hair.

ARIANNE
(over her shoulder)
I'll be through in a minute.

KATHY
That's okay. I can see.

ARIANNE
Do you mind waiting.

KATHY
What?

ARIANNE
It bothers me having you look
over my shoulder.

KATHY
You're kidding.

ARIANNE
No, I'm not kidding.

KATHY
... 'Scuse me.

AMY
My God, they must have cost a
fortune.

ARIANNE
(over her shoulder)
Dino didn't buy them. They're
my grandmother's.

SHELBY MUNKER rushes in.

SHELBY
MUFFIN! You won't believe it!
(hugging MUFFIN)
You won't believe it!

MUFFIN
What?

SHELBY
You've already got twelve place
settings of your dinnerware, and
they haven't even started opening
the gifts.

MUFFIN
Ooh! You're kidding! Who from?

SHELBY
I'm not sure. I think the Farrells.
You won't believe the loot downstairs.
I counted at least six toasters.

AMY
You mean to tell me Will
Farrell is rich too? Well,
that does it. He is
definitely mine for today.

RUTHIE
Does he know that?

AMY
He will.

RUTHIE
You think he's interested in
married women?

AMY
(displaying her left hand)
Who might you be referring to,
Mrs. Gerasch?

RUTHIE
Amy McDermott, where are your
rings!
(examining her hand)
Will you look at this. Amy
took off her wedding rings.

AMY
Just for the party.

BUFFY
Terrific. One for each of us.

MUFFIN
(hands Shelby a box)
Here. Open your present...Are
there any other biggies?

SHELBY
Oh God, it's incredible. There's
a crystal punch bowl that looks
like it was carved out of a diam
(reacting to her gift)
Oh, 'UFFIN! It's beautiful.
You're such a love.

BUFFY
I'm going downstairs and get some
booze.

MUFFIN
BUFFY, you want to bring Candy he
present?

BUFFY
Sure.
(she picks up the box, then, to
Arianne, as she EXITS)
Keep working on it, hon. It's
getting there.

MUFFIN

Uh oh. Look out for Amy!

RUTHIE

(to Mary Anne)

See what happens when you travel
without your husband.

AMY

Now, now. What little bit Frank
doesn't know, won't hurt him.

SHELBY

I do declare. It's Scarlet McDermott.

RUTHIE

Don't worry about Frankie boy. He's
probably kicking it up pretty good
himself.

The GIRLS enjoy this. ARIANNE starts to leave.

MUFFIN

Arianne? Honey, you haven't even
opened your present.

ARIANNE

I'll get it later.

She EXITS. MUFFIN makes a 'terrible face' after her. More REACTIONS and
GOSSIP.

INT. MAIN ENTRY

More introductions and pleasantries, LOUIS introduces DR. MEECHAN to the
BRENNERS, then calls RITA over. With his arm around her, Louis tells the
Brenners he had to go all the way to New York to find someone of RITA'S
caliber, and recommends her as guide for their tour of the house.
RITA says she will be delighted to show them every room of the house
after the wedding photographs have been taken.

MR. BRENNER

I'm afraid I'm going to have to
see the bathroom before I can stand
still for any picture taking.

This is greeted by polite laughter as Louis sends the butler (FRANK) to escort Mr. Brenner to the men's room. The lyrical sound of Mildred Haynes' PIANO can be heard from down the hall.

During this, RANDOLPH enters. He greets his employer (Louis) with a polite nod.

RANDOLPH
Mr. Duarde. Congratualtions, sir.

LOUIS
thank you, Randolph. Everything going along well?

RANDOLPH
Just fine, sir. No problems.

LOUIS
Excellent. Excellent.

RANDOLPH moves away from LOUIS and over to DR. MEECHAM. He takes the doctor aside, and whispers in his ear. Dr. Meecham abruptly turns, and without a word, strides down the hallway, Randolph following.

REGINA notices this, and calls after him.

REGINA
Jules...Is everything alright?

But he is long gone...

ARIANNE reenters, and goes to her father. RITA asks all members of the wedding party to assemble for the wedding photographs. As the guests start down the hallway, ARIANNE confides to her father that she wants to change first. She's embarrassed to be photographed in "this disgusting pink dress!" Louis puts an arm around her, whispering,

LOUIS
Wait just a little longer,
my beauty...for me.

REGINA is concerned about her mother, and asks RITA if she has time to look in on her before the photographs. Rita sends her off with a smile, urging her to join them as soon as she can. Then, suddenly remembering, she calls after her.

RITA
Mrs. Duarde...Mrs. Duarde.

But her voice is swallowed up in the DIN OF ARRIVING GUESTS.

RITA
(to herself)
Oh dear...Oh, dear.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

The NURSE and RANDOLPH stand next to the huge four-poster bed, wherein lies NETTIE VOGELSANG, her eyes closed, hands folded across her bosom. DR. MEECIAM, his 'black bag' beside him, sits on the bed looking at the lifeless matriarch, his face mirroring concern.

RANDOLPH
I waited because I felt you would want to be the one to break the news to Mr. and Mrs. Duarde, Dr. Meecham.

The NURSE reacts. DR. MEECIAM sighs heavily.

DR. MEECIAM
All right, Randolph, I'll take care of it.

RANDOLPH
Very good, sir. If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to call on me.

DR. MEECIAM
Thank you.

RANDOLPH EXITS.

DR. MEECIAM
(to himself)
Nettie, Nettie...Couldn't even
wait till the party was over.

NURSE
She was fiercier than ever this
morning. Insisted on knowing
every single detail of the wedding.

DR. MEECIAM
(smiling to himself)
I can imagine.

He puts a hand on Nettie's forehead, patting it gently, then:

DR. MEECIAM!
Who else knows about this, Janet?

NURSE
Just Randolph. I tried to tell
Miss Billingsly, but she acted like
she didn't even hear me.

DR. MEECIAM
That figures.

Without a knock, the door opens, and REGINA ENTERS. The NURSE freezes.

REGINA
Mother?

DR. MEECIAM quickly leans over NETTIE, shielding her from Regina's view.
He sticks a thermometer in her mouth.

DR. MEECIAM
She can't talk now, dear, I'm
taking her temperature.

REGINA

Oh, I'm sorry, Jules.

DR. MEECHAM, still using himself as a shield, waves one of Nettie's arms in Regina's direction, then begins to read its pulse.

REGINA

(reacting to the wave)
Don't try to speak, darling. I
just wanted you to know that the
ceremony was absolutely beautiful.
You would have been very proud.
(then, to Dr. Meecham)
How is her temperature, Jules?

DR. MEECHAM

A little below normal, I think.

REGINA

Below?

DR. MEECHAM

Nothing to worry about...under
the circumstances.

REGINA

Well, I won't bother you now.
(to Nettie)
I'll look in on you later, dear.
Love and kisses.

She blows her mother a kiss, and starts to leave. Dr. Meecham moves to her at the door.

DR. MEECHAM

(in confidence)
Regina, I don't think Nettie should
have any more visitors just now.
I'd like her to get all the rest
she can.

REGINA

I understand perfectly, Jules.
The poor darling's been under
such a strain.

DR. MEECIAM

So, if you could explain to the
others...

REGINA

Of course I will. Don't even
give it a thought.

She waves goodbye, and tiptoes out. The DOCTOR looks after her.

DOWNSTAIRS - MAIN HALL

Buzzing with activity, as more and more people arrive. The FILM CREW has set up their equipment at the far end of the hall, near the ORCHESTRA. Servants greet the guests with trays of hors d'oeuvres and champagne. Through the windows of the hall we can see some of the CHILDREN already playing outside on the lawn near the giant 'buffet tent'.

The SECURITY CHIEF crackles into his WALKIE TALKIE, berating one of the guards (his younger brother) for his 'gross' informality over the airwaves.

ANGLE - WEDDING PARTY

In front of the flowered lattice backdrops, RITA helps the STILL PHOTOGRAPHER position members of the WEDDING PARTY for their photograph. One of the ushers, EDWARD CLINTON, is missing. He finally hurries in and takes his place, explaining that he was visiting with his mother (Libby) in the kitchen. A bridesmaid (RUTHIE GERASCH) struggles to get her painfully swollen feet back into her high heels, while RITA offers cheery encouragement.

ANGLE - REGINA

Descending the staircase. At the foot of the stairs, sister CLARICE collars her, waving a stack of telegrams in her face.

CLARICE

(fuming)

Regina, have you seen these?

REGINA
(vacantly)
Not yet, dear.

And she breezes right by Clarice...and over to her aunt, BEATRICE SLOAN CORY, giving her the news that Nettie is resting now and won't be receiving guests for awhile.

REGINA
(to Beatrice)
Jules doesn't think we should
try to awaken her just now.

REGINA moves on, taking her place beside LOUIS for the WEDDING PARTY photograph.

ANOTHER ANGLE
DR. MEECHAM crosses the room, and heads straight for the bar, as the PHOTOGRAPHER successfully snaps off a picture of the entire WEDDING PARTY.

ANTOINETTE AND MACKENZIE
View the proceedings with benevolent smiles and whispered asides. CLARICE joins them, still fuming about the 'no show' guests and, in particular, her friend, Jane Richey.

CLARICE
Shabby! that's what it is...God!
When I think of all of her crummy
parties we've attended...

ANTOINETTE
Well dear, it's nothing to get
mussed about.

CLARICE
Have you seen these?
(thumbing through telegrams)
The Langleys, the Dwyers, Millicent,
The Courtneys, the Rogers'...Nobody's
coming. It's a disgrace.

ANTOINETTE
Clarice, darling, what did
you expect?
(looking toward the bride)
It isn't exactly the match
of the century.

CLARICE
Oh...Balls!

BACK TO WEDDING PARTY PHOTOGRAPHS

The PARENTS of the newlyweds are PHOTOGRAPHED. During this,

LOUIS
You have a very charming family,
Susan. Very charming.

MRS. BRENNER
Thank you, Louis. I like to think
they're...pretty special.

LOUIS
They are indeed. You should be
very proud.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh, I am...What about yours?
Will any of them be here today?

LOUIS
I beg your pardon?

MRS. BRENNER
Your real family, I mean. From...
It is Italy, isn't it?

LOUIS
(somerly)
Oh...I'm afraid not.

MRS. BRENNER
What a shame. They couldn't
make the trip?

Louis puts his arm around her, speaking in confidence.

LOUIS
Susan...This is something I don't
often talk about, but my family...

LOUIS (con't)
my family no longer exists.

MRS. BRENNER
...You don't mean?...

LOUIS
(nodding)
Yes.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh, Louis...All of them?

LOUIS
Everyone.

MRS. BRENNER
Good Lord!...How!

LOUIS
...A plane crash.

MRS. BRENNER
No...

LOUIS
I was bringing them over to
this country...to be with me...
here, in this house.

MRS. BRENNER
(moved)
Oh, Louis. That's the most
horrible thing I've ever heard.

LOUIS
(comforting her)
There, there, now. It's not as
bad as it seems. I still have
many things to be thankful for.
A wonderful wife. Wonderful
children...
(gesturing at surroundings)
All of this.

MRS. BRENNER
And us, Louis. You have us now.
As of today, we're all part of
your family. And I mean that
sincerely.

LOUIS

I know you do, Susan, dear. And
I can't tell you how comforting
that is.

The PHOTOGRAPHER is ready to photograph the BRENNERS.

MR. BRENNER (O.S.)

C'mon, Suz, it's our turn.

MRS. BRENNER

Be right there, Snookspie.
(soto voce to Louis)
All of us.

She moves away to take her place beside MR. BRENNER.

ANOTHER ANGLE

BEATRICE SLOAN CORY and her daughter, VICTORIA, discuss the odd
collection of USHERS presently being grouped together by RITA for the
next wedding party photograph.

VICTORIA

I can't imagine why Dino invited
perfect strangers to be his ushers.

BEATRICE

(draining her glass)
Because he doesn't have any friends.

VICTORIA winces at her mother's blaring voice.

ANGLE - THE USHERS

RITA is trying hard to assemble the USHERS for their photograph, but it
is not an easy task. MACKENZIE GODDARD seems preoccupied with something
over in MRS. BRENNER'S direction. BUNKY, delighted with his new Dunhill
lighter, shouts enthusiastic 'thank you's' to DINO. CAPT. REEDLEY
ENSTEDT, self-appointed 'mother hen', urges his group to obey RITA'S
orders. RUSSELL GERASCH comments on the chaos in 'C.B.' lingo, much
to the amusement of MR. BRENNER who watches nearby.

RUSSELL

This is Marathon Man to all my good buddy chicken chokers out there. I'm runnin in a convoy here of six Buffalo with peanut butter in their ears. But our own little ratchet jawed Smokey Bear is whippin us into sunshine and backin us off the hammer. So, not to worry. The picture will be took. That's ten-ten and listen in.

The PHOTOGRAPHER snaps their picture.

BACK TO BEATRICE AND VICTORIA

DR. MEECHAN passes by, drink in hand. BEATRICE calls him over, and asks him 'how in the devil' Nettie can sleep through all this racket.

BEATRICE

What did you do, Jules?
Give her a horse tranquilizer?

She laughs heartily at her own joke.

VICTORIA

Mother, please.

BEATRICE

Don't 'mother please' me, young lady. When you're my age, and still standing, you've a right to speak your mind... Isn't that so, Jules.

DR. MEECHAN

I wouldn't know quite yet, Beatrice.

He moves across the room toward LOUIS.

BACK TO WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS

MR. BRENNER is photographed with MUFFIN and BUFFY. The PHOTOGRAPHER requests one shot alone with the bride, and BUFFY steps aside. We might catch a glimpse of jealousy here.

ANOTHER PART OF THE ROOM

REGINA introduces BISHOP MARTIN to DAVID and CANDICE RUTELEDGE. A brief, ecumenical stalemate.

The wedding photographs completed, RITA organizes the RECEIVING LINE: (MRS. BRENNER, REGINA, DINO and MUFFIN, BUFFY, and the BRIDESMAIDS). During this, a commotion outside draws considerable attention.

EXT. DUARDE ESTATE - DAY

The object of the commotion, TRACY FARRELL, on horseback, jumps a fence and canters onto the grounds with a flourish. Instantly, the SECURITY MEN, led by THE CHIEF, converge on the 'intruder', demanding identification. TRACY swats them away with her crop. Before long she is surrounded by friends and admirers, and we will come to know that she is Dino's ex-sweetheart. During this, a MOTORCYCLE barrels into the circular driveway, gunning its engine, and causing Tracy's horse to shy. She finally gets it under control, and quickly dismounts, leaving the skitterish animal with the security men, as she strides toward the house in her stylish jodpers.

The motorcycle rider (TONY BRIGGS) tall, waspish, in his early twenties, outfitted in dress leathers, enters the home at the same moment as TRACY. They pass each other on the way in.

TRACY

You ruined my entrance.

TONY

You didn't help mine much either.

RANDOLPH calls CLARICE aside, and asks for a word in private, as RITA directs family members and guests toward the RECEIVING LINE...

MRS. BRENNER, first in the RECEIVING LINE, hardly knows anyone present, and REGINA does her foggy best to ease that awkward situation.

NOTE:

As friends, relatives and guests pass through the receiving line, we will catch glimpses of their different personalities, attitudes, facades and relationships. We will see, for example:

TRACY FARRELL'S benevolent embrace of her rival, MUFFIN, whom she obviously hates.

CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT, Dino's faculty friend, in his academy dress uniform, engage his ex-student in a peculiar, macho handshake contest, just to see if he's kept himself in shape.

BUFFY BRENNER surreptitiously goose the GROOM during a family introduction.

REGINA introduce her brother-in-law, MACKENZIE GODDARD to MRS. BRENNER.

MACKENZIE

Susan Anne Ruteledge Brenner.
What a mellifluous name.

MRS. BRENNER

Why...thank you, Mr. Goddard.

MACKENZIE

Please. Call me Mac.

MRS. BRENNER

...Thank you.....Mac.

MACKENZIE

My pleasure, indeed.

MACKENZIE kisses her hand, gallantly. We will sense MRS. BRENNER'S confusion at this behavior.

(DURING THE RECEIVING LINE)

INT. HALLWAY

RANDOLPH has just given CLARICE the news of her mother's death.

CLARICE
(fighting back tears)
Oh, Randolph...Dear God, spare
me.

RANDOLPH
I know what a terrible shock this
must be for you. That's why I
wanted you to hear it from me
first.

She takes his hand.

CLARICE
I'm glad. Thank you.
(then)
The others? Do they know?

RANDOLPH
(shaking his head)
Only Dr. Meecham.

CLARICE
Probably just as well. I'm
not sure they could handle it.

RANDOLPH
Will you be all right?

CLARICE
(smiling bravely)
I'll have to be. Mother would
have wanted nothing less.

ANGLE - STAIRCASE

BISHOP MARTIN struggles up the last few steps, pauses at the top of
the staircase to catch his breath, then staggers down the hallway toward
Nettie's room.

INT. NETTIE'S BEDROOM

BISHOP MARTIN enters and walks straight for the bed. The NURSE reacts,

dumbstruck, makes a move to stop him, but thinks better of it.

BISHOP MARTIN

Ah ha. There you are, you old sinner. Hiding under the covers like a bedbug. Didn't think I could make it up those stairs, did you? Well it wasn't easy. But I wouldn't have missed this for anything.

He slumps down on the bed next to Nettie's body.

BISHOP MARTIN

Lord in heaven, that's quite a climb.

He peers into Nettie's face, his eyes twinkling.

BISHOP MARTIN

Playing possum, humh? Well, I don't blame you a bit, Nettie Vogelsang. For once in your life you didn't get your own way. Wanted a quickie, didn't you. No Mass, no frills, right?...Uh humh. There's that smile. Well, I'm here to tell you, old fox, your granddaughter got the Bishop's best today...Grandson.. Yes, grandson. Fine boy...I haven't said Mass like that in thirty years. Didn't miss a cue. Never peeked at my notes once. Look at this.

He pulls out his cuffs. They are covered with ink scrawls.

BISHOP MARTIN

On every garment I own. The words seem to slip away over the years. But today. I was in my prime, Nettie. Those children had a proper ceremony.

BISHOP MARTIN (con't)
As the good Lord meant it to be.
(wagging a finger at her)
Yes, yes, there's that smile.
I know. I know how you feel about
religion. Horse puckey, right?
Well, Mrs. know-it-all, you'll come
around. And I'll be at the door to
let you in, when you do...That's
right, you go ahead and smile. Just
remember one thing. I've got
twenty years on you, Nettie. And I
always will.

He gets up from the bed.

BISHOP MARTIN
I don't know why I bother to do
this, but---

The Bishop mumbles a blessing over his old friend, then,

BISHOP MARTIN
All right. I've had my say.

He turns to go, then spots the NURSE for the first time.

BISHOP MARTIN
Who in the devil are you?

NURSE
I'm...the nurse.

BISHOP MARTIN
Don't you believe in knocking
on doors, young lady?

NURSE
...I was.....I've been---

BISHOP MARTIN

Never mind, it doesn't matter.
We're through here. I just came
up to gloat.
(He heads toward the door)
See you in church, old girl.

The Bishop exits.

DOWNSTAIRS - MAIN ROOM
LOUIS and MR. BRENNER

MR. BRENNER

Big oil company'll sign you up
and guarantee you a million
gallons at a fixed tank wagon
price, less two cents. A contract,
right? Hell, it doesn't mean a
damn thing. Year ago they raised the
price of number two diesel from
thirty eight cents to fifty four cents,
in a week!

LOUIS

Incredible.

MR. BRENNER

No explanation. Nothin. All
they gotta do is tell the world they're
runnin out of oil. Then you get a
letter saying they're gonna renegotiate
your contract, and that's it. I'm up
against the wall. I've got forty
seven pumps, forty of 'em pushin number
two, and I've got to keep a seven cent
margin just to stay alive.

LOUIS

Amazing.

MR. BRENNER

Can't fight 'em, either. I take
'em to court and try to hold 'em
to the original contract, their
lawyers'd jump in, tie it up, and
in two months my whole business'd
be down the toilet.

LOUIS
Unbelievable.

DR. MEECHAM approaches.

MR. BRENNER
Oil companies rule the whole damn
world, and don't let anybody
tell you different.

DR. MEECHAM
Louis, when you have a minute, I'd
like to speak to you.

LOUIS
Of course, Jules.
(to Mr. Brenner)
Will you excuse me for just a
moment, Snooks?

MR. BRENNER
Yeah. Sure.

LOUIS and DR. MEECHAM walk off together.

ANGLE - MAIN ROOM
JIM HAVOR, a large man in an ill-fitting tuxedo, who is noticeably
tipsy, wanders in from outside and weaves his way toward the
RECEIVING LINE.

ANGLE - ANTOINETTE
Watching. She spots CLARICE, and motions her over.

ANTOINETTE
(frowning)
Clarice...That man over there...
Isn't he the gardener?

CLARICE glances toward the RECEIVING LINE.

CLARICE
Dear God, it is.
(shaking her head)
It's all too much. Too bizarre.

ANTOINETTE

Well for heaven's sake, darling,
tell him to leave. This isn't
open house, you know. He has no
business---

CLARICE

I can't Tony. I just can't. Not
now.

ANTOINETTE

Clarice, don't be childish. This
is your home, and he's---

CLARICE

(trembling)
I will not speak to him!

ANTOINETTE

Very well then...I will.

ANTOINETTE starts across the room.

CLOSER ANGLE - RECEIVING LINE

REGINA looks up in surprise as JIM HARBOR greets her in the receiving line.

REGINA

Jim!...What on earth...I mean,
I didn't expect to see you.

JIM

Oh? Well, I figured...the cook's
son was an usher...I could certainly
be a guest...I mean, I went and rented
this suit--

REGINA

Well...of course you can...
(reacting, as Jim kisses her hand)
Jim...please....

JIM
(to Mrs. Brenner)
And you must be the mother of that
beautiful child who corralled our
little stallion.

MRS. BRENNER
Yes, I'm Susan Anne Brenner.

JIM
How charming.

He proceeds to kiss her hand. ANTOINETTE arrives.

REGINA
(embarrassed)
Jim, you remember my sister,
Mrs. Goddard.

JIM
Aunt Toto from Palm Beach. How
could I forget.

ANTOINETTE
(pointedly)
Don't you have some duties to
attend to outside, Mr. Habor?

JIM
(shaking his head)
Nothing the flies can't take care
of.

With a wink, JIM continues down the receiving line, leaving the ladies
to fend for themselves.

INT. LOUIS'S STUDY

A spacious room, plushly decorated in 'masculine' colors. At one end
of the room, we see a large oak dining table set with ten formal place
settings. DR. MEECHAM is seated at the bar, watching LOUIS pace back
and forth.

LOUIS
(cursing in Italian)
You wretched old bitch! I hope
your bones rot in hell for this!

DR. MEECHAM
In English, Louis. Talk to me in
English.

LOUIS
Why! Why now! Of all times.

Dr. Meecham sighs, and takes a slug of his drink.

DR. MEECHAM
The question we have to deal with, is,
how to break the news to Regina.

LOUIS turns, addressing him somberly.

LOUIS
Regina mustn't know.

DR. MEECHAM
Well, she's going to have to know
sometime. that's her mother lying
dead upstairs.

LOUIS
(passionately)
Her mother! Don't talk to me about
her mother!...Tell me one time she was
there when Regina needed her. One
time. The accident?...No Jules. Not
then. Not ever.

DR. MEECHAM
Louis, that's all in the past now.

LOUIS
What past! My wife is crippled for
life, Jules. You know that as well
as I do! Her mother's dead? All right.

LOUIS (con't)
Good riddance, and God rest her soul.
Now, I make the decisions.

There is a moment of silence.

DR. MEECIAM
All right, Louis. What do you
want to do?

LOUIS
Nothing. We do nothing. We say
nothing. Till after the reception...
(reaching for his glass)
Here, let me freshen your drink.

The doctor checks his glass, then hands it to Louis.

DR. MEECIAM
Why not.

Louis proceeds to pour two stiff drink's.

LOUIS
Exactly. There's no reason in the
world Regina has to know about it
now...They can all wait.

He hands the doctor his drink, then raises his glass in a toast.

LOUIS (con't)
To the living, Jules.

The clink glasses.

DR. MEECIAM
Mud in your eye.

LOUIS
Salute.

INT. MAIN ROOM

The RECEIVING LINE is thinning out now, as the different members of the wedding party embrace, introduce each other to friends and gobble up the hors d'oeuvres and champagne.

MUFFIN, beside herself with excitement, gushes thanks to ANTOINETTE for her wedding gift, a two week honeymoon trip to Palm Beach. We will hear Antoinette remind DINO and MUFFIN that they're both too old to call her 'Aunt Toto'. Nearby, MACKENZIE cranes his neck to gaze at MRS. BRENNER.

ANGLE - TONY BRIGGS

He makes his way toward the dwindling RECEIVING LINE. En route, he takes two glasses of champagne from a tray. REGINA greets him enthusiastically.

REGINA
Tony, darling. I'm so glad to see you. We were so worried when you didn't show up. What happened dear?

TONY
I had an automobile accident.

REGINA
Oh, no. What a shame...Dino, look who's here.

DINO and TONY greet each other.

DINO
What happened to you.

TONY
Cracked up my car.

DINO
Oh, yeah? Bad?

TONY
Not enough to make me miss my
roomie's big day...Hold these.

TONY hands DINO the glasses of champagne, and moves to MUFFIN.

TONY
(to MUFFIN)
May I kiss the bride?

Before MUFFIN has a chance to answer, TONY gives her an embarrassingly intimate kiss. She is flushed when she finally manages to break away. TONY, smiling, turns back to DINO.

TONY
Really went and did it, huhh?

DINO
Couldn't stay away, huhh?

TONY takes one of the glasses from DINO.

TONY
Better drink up. You're going
to need it, Tiger.

They touch glasses in a toast.

TONY
To friendship...and loyalty...
and all that other bullshit.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE MAIN ROOM - DANCE AREA
RITA signals to the ORCHESTRA, and the MUSIC begins. She motions
DINO and MUFFIN over to the dance area. LOUIS and DR. MEECHAN
enter, and join the other guests, as they congregate around the
dance area to watch DINO and MUFFIN take their traditional first
dance.

Next, MRS. BRENNER dances with her new son-in-law (DINO), while LOUIS takes a turn around the floor with MUFFIN. We will hear him whisper to her:

LOUIS
If there's anything you ever
need, you know who to call.
You're family now.

As LOUIS gracefully spins MUFFIN around the floor, two of the bridesmaids, SHELBY MUNKER and AMY McDERMOTT, watch admiringly.

ANGLE - SHELBY and AMY

SHELBY
God, he's dreamy.

AMY
Italians always are.

SHELBY
How did he get so rich?

AMY shrugs, provocatively.

AMY
Nobody seems to know. Very
mysterioso.

SHELBY
Do you think?

AMY
What else?

The bridesmaids turn their attention back to LOUIS with heightened interest.

Next, DINO dances with REGINA, and

MR. BRENNER with MUFFIN. BUFFY watches nearby. Mr. Brenner exhibits a much more takish ballroom style than Louis, and his low, suggestive dips with the bride cause a few eyebrows to be raised in the Duarde clan.

DINO takes a turn with the maid of honor, BUFFY BRENNER. She whispers in his ear.

BUFFY
I have a surprise for you.

DINO
What?

BUFFY
I'm pregnant.

DINO
What!?

BUFFY
You heard me.

DINO
(laughing)
Wow. You're too much.
Anything for a joke, Buffyo.

BUFFY
You think I'm joking.

DINO
I know you are...big sister.

Others join in the dancing now, and for the next few minutes we will see cuts of the following actions, some of which take place simultaneously:

DANCE FLOOR - AMY MCDERMOTT AND JIM HABOR dancing.

AMY
Somebody told me you were the
gardener here.

JIM
That's what we like people to
think.

AMY
You don't work for Mr. Duarde?

JIM
Let's just say we work together.

AMY
(warming to him)
Tell me more.

JIM
Actually...I'm his financial advisor...
and trouble shooter.

AMY
...Wow.

JIM
Not for publication, Miss.

AMY
You can trust me, Jim.

JIM
I trust no one.

AMY
(snuggling close)
I love that.

ANGLE - MR. BRENNER AND REGINA dancing.

REGINA
I'm so very pleased with the
way things worked out. Such

REGINA (con't)
a beautiful wedding...Lovely
reception...Just the way it
should always be.

MR. BRENNER
Well, I'll tell you something. E
Even back when I was drivin a rig...
and in those days I didn't have
didley...I promised myself when
my girls grew up and wanted to get
married, they were gonna have the
best. The very biggest and the
best. I mean, what the hell else
can a father give his daughter.

REGINA, overcome with a rush of emotion, turns her head away.

MR. BRENNER
Hey...Regina. Listen, you're not
crying, are ya?

She shakes her head, no.

MR. BRENNER
(a nervous chuckle)
I gotta tell you, that's the one
thing I can't...I mean, it really
drives me up the wall, you know?

REGINA
(girding herself)
Forgive me, Snooks...I keep
forgetting...I'm not losing
a daughter, I'm gaining a son.

Again Mr. Brenner laughs nervously, in total confusion.

ANGLE - LOUIS AND MRS. BRENNER
Dancing. Mrs. Brenner is not at home on a dance floor.

MRS. BRENNER
You're such a wonderful dancer,
Louis. I feel embarrassed.

LOUIS
Dear Susan, how foolish. I
think you're doing beautifully.

MRS. BRENNER
Well, it's not really one of my
best things.

LOUIS
You underestimate yourself.

MRS. BRENNER
You're very kind.

MACKENZIE GODDARD taps LOUIS on the shoulder.

MACKENZIE
May I cut in, old boy.

LOUIS
Ah, Mac. Of course.
(to Mrs. Brenner)
You see? The belle of the ball.

LOUIS retreats, as MACKENZIE takes over.

MRS. BRENNER
I have to warn you, Mac.
I'm kind of a rotten dancer.

MACKENZIE
My dear Susan, beauty is in the
eye of the beholder...and I am
engulfed by what I see.

MACKENZIE draws her to him, swaying romantically to the music. MRS. BRENNER is crushed against his massive frame, barely able to breathe.

MRS. BRENNER

My goodness...

(a long moment of silence)

Oh, Mac, I'm sorry. I stepped on your toe...I warned you...

(more silence)

I've always been embarrassed about not being able to dance, but there just isn't much occasion to, back in Louisville...Except for socials at my brother's church... And they're mostly square dancing.

(still more silence)

Snooks loves to dance, and he's very good at it. I just can't keep up with him...So...You're very good at it yourself.

MRS. BRENNER tries to sneak a glance at her dance partner, but cannot extricate herself from his crushing embrace. MACKENZIE, eyes closed, is lost in his reverie.

MRS. BRENNER (con'td)

(struggling for conversation)

Regina tells me you're an art collector.

I really think that's wonderful. I love art. I don't really know that much about it, but I think it would be wonderful to be able to...just collect it.

(dead silence)

...Mac, would it be all right if I just turned my head to the other side? I'm sort of getting a stiff neck.

MACKENZIE suddenly releases his hold, and faces MRS. BRENNER.

MACKENZIE

Susan Anne, I must speak. I can't keep silent any longer.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh, Mac, I've offended you.
Good Lord, I didn't mean it to
sound like you gave me a stiff---

MACKENZIE
Please, Susan Anne, listen to me.

MRS. BRENNER
Forgive me, Mac.

MACKENZIE
I love you, Susan Anne.

MRS. BRENNER
I wouldn't dream of...What?

MACKENZIE
I know it sounds insane. I've
never felt this way before in
my life. But I'm an intelligent,
well educated man, Susan Anne. I
know myself and I know my heart.
And I simply cannot deny the fact
that I've fallen hopelessly in
love with you.

MRS. BRENNER
...Mac!...

MACKENZIE
Yes, yes, yes. It's brash.
It's foolhardy. It makes no
sense at all. I know that, Susan
Anne. But it's real. I can't
help myself. I must be with you.
See you - touch you - talk to you---

MRS. BRENNER claps a hand over her mouth, and begins backing away from
MACKENZIE. He holds on to her other hand, as she backs off the dance
floor.

MACKENZIE
Please. Don't go.

MRS. BRENNER
(backing up)
I have to.

MACKENZIE
Tell me where...We could meet.

MRS. BRENNER pulls free, shaking her head, one hand still clapped over her mouth.

MRS. BRENNER
Ladies room.

She runs from the dance floor, and scurries up the staircase.
MACKENZIE watches, dazed and perspiring.

ANGLE - UPSTAIRS
MRS. BRENNER lurches into a bathroom, slamming the door behind her.
We might overhear some muffled retching sounds.

ANGLE - DOWNSTAIRS
DINO approaches WILL FARRELL (Tracy's brother), who is standing by the champagne table.

DINO
Hey, Will. They teach you how to handle paternity cases at Harvard?

WILL
You planning to molest someone on your honeymoon?

DINO drains a glass of champagne.

DINO (con't)
No. But I may have to take a part time job to pay for Buffy's abortion.

WILL
That's pretty funny.

DINO
Yeah, really. Hysterical.

He downs another glass of champagne.

WILL
...I hope to hell you're
kidding.

DINO
I hope to hell she is.

DINO walks off toward MUFFIN. TONY BRIGGS comes over and takes two glasses of champagne. WILL watches DINO nuzzling MUFFIN.

WILL
What a little terd.

TONY
Anyone I know?

WILL
(nodding toward Dino)
Who else?

TONY
Oh, come on, Will. Just because
he jilted your sister to marry
my girlfriend, doesn't mean he's
all bad.

WILL
Yeah? What would you say if I
told you he also knocked up
his sister in law?

TONY
...What!?

WILL
You heard me. He was just

WILL (con't)
over here bragging about it.

TONY bursts out laughing.

TONY
...Too much!...I mean, that's
really admirable.

WILL
I'd like to deck the little
terd.

TONY
Well, whatever. But you'd
better sit on that last bit of
news. Something like that
gets around, it could ruin the
whole party.

TONY moves off.

INT. UPSTAIRS - RITA
RITA knocks on the bathroom door.

RITA
Mrs. Brenner? It's Rita, dear.
Are you all right?

MRS. BRENNER (O.S.)
...Yes, Rita, I'm fine, thank you.

We hear the flush of a toilet.

RITA
Oh, I'm glad dear. I was worried
about you. I thought you might be
ill.

INT. BATHROOM

MRS. BRENNER is rinsing her mouth out at the wash basin.

MRS. BRENNER

...No, no...I was...just freshening
up a little. The heat, you know?

RITA (O.S)

That's lovely, dear. Then I'll
see you downstairs.

MRS. BRENNER

I'll be there in a jiffy.

MRS. BRENNER spits out the mouthwash, takes a deep breath and looks
at herself in the mirror. She starts to leave, then turns back to
the mirror and pulls some of the tight curls of her hairdo down
over her forehead - just a hint of the provocative.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - MAIN ROOM

TRACY FARRELL is trying hard to ignore DINO and MUFFIN who are
blatantly 'necking' a few feet away from her. TONY arrives with
champagne, perceiving the situation immediately. He hands TRACY
a glass.

TONY

Here you go.

TRACY

(eyeing the newlyweds)
Thanks.

TONY

(raising glass in a toast)
To evil spells and exotic
tortures.

TRACY

I'll drink to that...for days.

CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT approaches, bowing gallantly to TRACY.

CAPT. ENSTEDT
Miss Farrell? Captain Reedley
Enstedt here. I was wondering
if I might have the pleasure
of a dance.

TRACY
...Well...sure.

TONY
(mocking)
Captain Enstedt! What a revelation.

CAPT. ENSTEDT
That'll do, Briggs.

TONY
I never knew you danced, sir.

CAPT. ENSTEDT
There's a lot you don't know, Briggs.
(offering his arm to Tracy)
Miss Farrell?

TONY
I'll bet...sir.

CAPT. ENSTEDT shoots him a glance, then moves off with TRACY.
TONY watches them, amused. He nudges DINO, pointing to the dance
floor.

TONY
Looks like long, hard Reedley's
out to change his image.

DINO
(smiling)
...I'll be damned.

MUFFIN
What's wrong with him?

DINO and TONY exchange looks, then DINO whispers in MUFFIN'S ear.
Her eyes widen with interest.

MUFFIN
Really?! You never told me
that before.

DINO embraces his BRIDE, playfully.

ANOTHER GROUP
ANTOINETTE and MACKENZIE, BISHOP MARTIN, MR. BRENNER, BUFFY,
standing near the dance area.

ANTOINETTE
Have you met Mr. Brenner, Bishop
Martin?

BISHOP MARTIN
No. How do you do.

MR. BRENNER
We met before the service, Bishop.

BISHOP
We did?

MR. BRENNER
Yes. I'm Muffin's father...
...The bride.

BISHOP
Yes. Lovely child.

MR. BRENNER
You remember my daughter, Buffy.

BISHOP
How do you do.

BUFFY
(pointing to dance area)
Look at Uncle David cut it up.
(calling out)
Way to go, Uncle David!

ANGLE - DANCE AREA -
DAVID RUTELEDGE dances with his wife CANDICE, bending his frame
around her seven month pregnancy.

BACK TO GROUP

MR. BRENNER
(to the Bishop)
That's my brother in law. He's
a Baptist minister. Helluva
dancer too.

BISHOP
Who?
MACKENZIE
(joking)
They say all Baptists have natural
rhythm.

BUFFY
I never heard that.

ANTOINETTE
He's joking, dear.

MR. BRENNER
They know how to have a good time,
I'll tell you that. And I'm
Catholic, myself.

BISHOP
You're right. Rhythm is Catholic.

ANTOINETTE
Would his congregation approve
of this, Mr. Brenner?

MR. BRENNER
Of dancing? Hell, yes.

ANTOINETTE
How unusual.

BUFFY
I'll bet Bishop Martin's a
pretty mean dancer himself.
Whatta you say, Bishop? Shall
we show 'em?

MR. BRENNER

Buffy---

BUFFY steps in front of BISHOP MARTIN, swaying seductively to the music.

BUFFY

Come on, Bishop Martin. Let's do it.

MR. BRENNER

(sharply)
Buffy.

BISHOP

What does she want to do?

BUFFY

(swaying)
Dance. It's good for the soul.

ANTOINETTE

I don't think Bishop Martin cares to dance, dear.

BISHOP

I don't care at all.

MR. BRENNER pulls BUFFY aside, abruptly.

MR. BRENNER

What the hell do you think you're doing, young lady.

BUFFY

Nothin...I--

MR. BRENNER

Don't you have any respect?
That's a man of the church, for Christ's sake.

BUFFY
Well, I didn't mean anything
bad. I was just playing.

MR. BRENNER
I don't ever want to see you act
like that. It looks cheap..It's
embarrassing.

BUFFY
Okay, daddy. I'm sorry. I won't
do it again...Promise...
(then, with a twinkle)
Cross my heart and hope to die,
I'm my daddy's sugar pie.

MR. BRENNER
(softening)
...Anymore nonsense like that,
...I'll pop you onw. Understand?
(then)
C'mon. Gilme my sugar.

MR. BRENNER and BUFFY share one of those luxurious hugs.

ANGLE - STAIRCASE

MRS. BRENNER descends the stairs, and joins the other guests.

ANTOINETTE and MACKENZIE watching MR. BRENNER and BUFFY

MACKENZIE
Very odd relationship there.

ANTOINETTE
Disgraceful. All of them. And
he's positively deranged.

MACKENZIE spots MRS. BRENNER.

MACKENZIE
Umm...Doesn't seem very stable, at
that. Certainly not to be trusted.
I'll have the servants keep an eye
on him. Excuse me, dear.

MACKENZIE leaves, and makes his way toward MRS. BRENNER.

ANGLE - MRS. BRENNER

She sees MACKENZIE coming toward her, starts to panic, then grabs her son (HUGH BRENNER) by the arm and drags him off to the dance area.

MRS. BRENNER
Hughie...Dance with Momma.

HUGH
Dance!? Mom! You hate dancing.

MRS. BRENNER
Not any more. I'm learning to love it. Hurry.

They reach the DANCE AREA, and MRS. BRENNER immediately pulls her son close to her and begins to dance, weaving in and out of the other couples in an attempt to disappear. MACKENZIE makes a bee line for her, tapping HUGH on the shoulder. MRS. BRENNER clutches her son, petrified.

MACKENZIE
Young man, may I cut in please?

HUGH
Sure.
(prying his mother's fingers loose)
Mom...Let go.

HUGH extricates himself, and leaves. MACKENZIE takes MRS. BRENNER into his arms.

MACKENZIE
My dearest Susan Anne, I thought I'd lost you.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, please. Before you go any further --

MACKENZIE
I know, I know, my sweetness.
It all happened so quickly.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, listen to me. I'm a
married woman.

MACKENZIE
I understand.

MRS. BRENNER
A Christian woman.

MACKENZIE
I love that about you.

MRS. BRENNER
I've never even thought of
another man.

MACKENZIE
Oh, God love you.

MRS. BRENNER
I couldn't. Even if I wanted
to, I just couldn't.

MACKENZIE
Susan Anne...

MRS. BRENNER
I'd break out in hives.

MACKENZIE
(purring in her ear)
Susan Anne. Susan Anne. Susan
Anne.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, please..You're tickling.

MACKENZIE
I love you, my searest. My
treasure. My heart.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, you have to stop. Right
now.

MACKENZIE
My love for you is like a shrine.

MACKENZIE (con't)
And I shall kneel before it til
the end of time.

MRS. BRENNER
I can't stand it any more.

MACKENZIE
(looking into her eyes)
Susan Anne. You are the most
excrutiatingly beautiful woman
I have ever laid eyes upon.

MRS. BRENNER
...Oh, Mac...
(suddenly clutching him)
What are we doing.

INT. KITCHEN
LIBBY and OSCAR try to administer to MAE HELLSTROM, who paces
restlessly.

LIBBY
Why don't you sit down and drink
this tea while it's still hot.

MAE
I can't sit down. I'm too tense
or restless or something.
I don't know what's going on
It's insane.

LIBBY
(throwing up her hands)
Shoot yourself.

OSCAR
(holds out two pills)
Here, Ms. Hellstrom. I want you
to take these.

MAE
No, no, Oscar. No more medication.
That's probably what's making me so
crazy.

OSCAR

Now don't get stubborn on me.
You got no business being up
on your feet in the first place.
But if you're gonna stay, you
gotta take care of yourself...Now,
go on.

MAE takes the pills.

MAE

All right. If that's what it
takes to make you happy. I'll
drink your tea, I'll take your
pills, I'll cater their party.
Today, my dears, we are in the
happiness business.

She washes down the pills.

MAE

So eat, drink and be merry. Our
time may be running out.

MAE glides out of the kitchen, humming a Swedish lullaby.

LIBBY

...She's sick in the head.
That's what she is.

INT. MAIN ROOM - DANCE AREA

USHERS take turns pairing off with MUFFIN and the BRIDESMAIDS.
MACKENZIE and MRS. BRENNER have stopped dancing.

MRS. BRENNER

I have to go now.

MACKENZIE

Not yet. Please.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, we're making a spectacle.
People are going to notice.

MACKENZIE
Let them. I don't care.

MRS. BRENNER
I do, Mac! My God!

MACKENZIE
All right dearest. But tell me
when we can meet again.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, I don't know. I just...
I have to mix.

MACKENZIE
I'll see you in five minutes,
then.

MRS. BRENNER
No!...Too soon.

MRS. BRENNER hurries off. MACKENZIE calls after her.

MACKENZIE
I'll be discreet. I'll bring
hors d'oeuvres.

ANGLE - AMY McDERMOTT and WILL FARRELL
Dancing, seductively. AMY on the prowl.

AMY
Don't knock it till you've
tried it.

WILL
I'd never do that.

AMY
Country girls are famous for
knowin how to treat their men.
It just comes natural.

WILL
I'm sure it does. It's the
city boys you have to watch
out for.

AMY
I think I can handle that.

WILL
That's probably what Buffy said.
And look what happened to her.

AMY
What?

WILL
She's pregnant.

AMY
Say what!? Who says?

WILL
The father.

AMY
Who?

WILL whispers in her ear. AMY'S eyes widen.

AMY
God almighty! You kiddin?

WILL
(shakes his head)
...city boys.

AMY
Holy shi-taqua.

ANGLE - REGINA
She approaches ARIANNE who watches glumly, as others dance.

REGINA
(kissing Arianne)
You look so lovely, darling.
Are having any fun.

ARIANNE
I'm fine, mother.

REGINA
I haven't seen you dance yet.
You're such a beautiful dan--

ARIANNE
Mother, please. Don't worry
about me. I'm just fine. All
right?

REGINA
All right, darling. I just want
you to have a good time.
(kisses her again)
I love you.

ARIANNE
(by rote)
Love you.

REGINA moves across the room to EDWARD CLINTON (the cook's son).

REGINA
Edward, dear. Be a love and
ask Arianne to dance. It would
mean so much to her.

EDWARD
(hedging)
...I'm really not much of a
dancer, Mrs. Duarde.

REGINA
Oh please, dear. She'd appreciate
it so much. You know how shy she
is, and...she looks so lonely. Just
one dance?

EDWARD

Well...

REGINA

For me. Please, Edward.

EDWARD

Okay, Mrs. Duarde.

REGINA

Oh, thank you, dear.

EDWARD moves off toward ARIANNE. LOUIS comes up to REGINA, cupping her face in his hands.

LOUIS

How is my bride?

REGINA

(smiling)

I'm just fine.

(then)

Am I acting all right, Louis?

LOUIS

Of course you are, darling.

Please don't worry about that.

Not for a moment.

REGINA

I don't want to embarrass you.

LOUIS

There's no way you could. Ever.

I'm very, very proud of you, Regina.

REGINA

Dear sweet Louis...You're so good.

ANGLE - ARIANNE

EDWARD CLINTON approaches.

EDWARD
Arianne? Would you like to
dance?

ARIANNE
...Don't be stupid, Edward.

ARIANNE moves away, leaving EDWARD out to dry.

ANGLE - DAVID AND CANDICE RUTELEDGE
TONY BRIGGS comes over to them. Tkey greet him warmly.

DAVID
Heard about your accident,
Tony. Certainly glad it
wasn't serious.

TONY
Thank you, sir. I guess God
was with me today.

DAVID
Praise the Lord. Praise his
name.

CANDICE
Did you know Mr. Duarde filled
in for you at the service?

TONY
Yes. I heard.

CANDICE
It was quite lovely, really.
Denomination notwithstanding.

DAVID
(chiding)
Charity, Candice. Charity.

TONY
Reverand Ruteledge, could I have
a word with you in private, sir?

DAVID
...Now, son?

TONY
Well, sir, it's just that I
have some information that's
been preying on my conscience,
and you're the only person here
I feel I can trust with it.

CANDICE
How sweet, Tony.
(to David)
Honey, why don't you two go
off in a corner and have a
nice heart to heart. I'll be
fine, right here.

DAVID
Fair enough. We won't be long,
dear.

TONY
Thank you, Mrs. Ruteledge.

CANDICE
My pleasure. God bless.

DAVID and TONY move off together.

ANGLE - MAE HELLSTROM

She moves through the crowd with a new, almost frenetic energy,
swaying to the music, calling out to friends, conversing with
herself - seemingly having a wonderful time. RITA rushes over to
her.

RITA
(in a whisper)
Mae, dear, are you feeling
all right?

MAE embraces RITA, kissing her on both cheeks.

MAE

I'm feeling extraordinary.
Don't ask me why, but...Who
knows...Perhaps I'm delirious...
then again...perhaps I'm...
flageerious.

MAE bursts into laughter, and moves off. RITA watches her with concern.

The tempo of the MUSIC BRIGHTENS, and gradually the dance floor is taken over by the 'rug cutters'.

REGINA and BUNKY LEMAY

REGINA drags the hesitant young USHER over to ARIANNE.

BUNKY

I don't know, Mrs. Duarde.
Really. I'm not even any good
at the slow stuff.

REGINA

Trust me, dear. You'll
be amazed how quickly it comes.
All you need is a little
encouragement.
(to Arianne)
Darling, you know Bunky Lemay.
He wanted very much to dance
with you, but he's embarrassed about
not knowing the steps. I told him
you'd be happy to help---

ARIANNE

Mother!

REGINA

(to Bunky)
Arianne's a marvelous dancer.
Just watch everything she does.
You'll be surprised how fast
you pick it up.

ARIANNE

Maybe he doesn't want to dance,
mother.

BUNKY

I really stink at it.

REGINA

Of course he does. He's just
shy, that's all. Go on, darling.

ARIANNE

Oh, mother.

REGINA embraces her daughter, whispering in her ear.

REGINA

He has such a crush on you.

BUNKY

(to Arianne)
Sorry.

ARIANNE sighs, then marches toward the dance area.

ARIANNE

Come on.

DANCERS

MR. BRENNER 'jitterbugs' raucously with ELEANOR, his sister from
New Jersey.

RUTHIE and RUSSELL GERASCH 'let it all out' nearby.

ARIANNE and BUNKY give it a go for a few seconds, before ARIANNE, embarrassed by her partner's hopeless incompetence, stalks off the dance floor, leaving the floundering BUNKY to fend for himself.

HUGH BRENNER and SHELBY MUNKER in a lather, dancing.

HUGH
I don't know how long...I
can keep this up...I'm getting
pooped.

SHELBY
You just say the word. I
can last forever.

HUGH stops dancing, shrugging apologetically.

HUGH
Afraid that's it for me.
I've had it...Sorry.

They leave the floor, and head for AMY.

SHELBY
You don't have to be sorry.
We did good...You feelin
okay, Hughie?

HUGH
Yeah, fine. I'm just pooped.

AMY greets them, handing each of them small FANS.

AMY
Here, you two. Looks like
you can use them.

SHELBY
(fanning herself)
More favors! Can you believe
it!? This band...Our own
fans...Incredible!

JIM HAVOR sidles up to AMY.

AMY
Wait'll you see the little
boxes of rose petals we're
supposed to throw.

SHELBY
God, they must have spent a
fortune on this.

AMY
(referring to Jim)
Here's the man who'd know.

AMY introduces JIM HAVOR to SHELBY and HUGH.

SHELBY
Do you know what this
reception cost, Mr. Havor?

JIM nods assuredly.

SHELBY
A lot?

JIM
It could have cured heart
disease.

JIM draws AMY aside.

JIM
Why don't we go outside
for a little stroll. I'll
show you my gardens.

AMY
(smiling)
Sounds terrific. I'd love
to see anything you grow.

They go off together.

ANOTHER ANGLE - DAVID RUTELEDGE and TONY BRIGGS
Returning from their private chat. TONY heads for TRACY FARRELL.
DAVID, somber faced, seeks out CANDICE.

DANCE FLOOR - RUTHIE AND RUSSELL GERASCH
RUTHIE turns an ankle when one of her heels breaks, and spewing
four letter epithets, has to be led off the floor by RUSSELL.

ANGLE - DAVID AND CANDICE

CANDICE
(appalled)
Oh no, no, no...Not our Buffy.
Dear Lord, what a disgrace.
How could she do this, David!

DAVID
Charity, Candice. Charity.
The powers of Darkness prey
upon the innocents. We must
not turn them aside, but receive
them instead into our hearts,
with His love and His mercy...
In His name.

CANDICE
(head bowed)
In Jesus' name, we pray.

DAVID
...Amen.

CANDICE
What should we do, David?

DAVID
I don't know.

ANGLE - TRACY AND TONY

TRACY
What a dummy...Poor baby.
Serves him right. I don't
mean to sound like a sour
grape, but...you get what
you order.

TONY
(offering champagne)
Care to celebrate?

TRACY
You're evil, Tony. You
really are.
(then, with a twinkle)
Let's dance.

ANGLE - HUGH BRENNER
A SERVANT brings him a glass of water, as REGINA approaches him.

REGINA
Hughie. Have you had a
chance to dance with Arianne
yet?

HUGH
Uh...Not yet, Mrs. Duarde.

REGINA
Why don't you ask her, dear.
She'd love it, if you did.

HUGH
Well, I'm kind of pooped right
now. Maybe in a little bit.

REGINA
Oh, Hughie. A big strong
boy like you, tired? Just
one dance. You'll make such
a lovely couple.

HUGH
Well...

REGINA
Please, dear.

HUGH
...Okay.

HUGH swallows a handful of PILLS, washing them down with water.

REGINA
Goodness. What are those?

HUGH
Just some pills.

HE starts to go.

REGINA
You're not ill, are you, dear?

HUGH
No; no. I take these every day.

REGINA
Really? Why is that, dear?

HUGH
Epilepsy.

HUGH moves off.

REGINA

Oh...

ANGLE - MACKENZIE and MRS. BRENNER
They speak in hushed tones.

MRS. BRENNER

Mac, we've got to stop meeting
like this. It just isn't right.
I mean I'm...I'm flattered pink,
and ever so grateful for all
the nice things you've said---

MAC

I'm in love with you, Susan Anne.

MRS. BRENNER

(catching her breath)
...Like that one...I mean it really
does make me feel warm and
wonderful to hear something like
that, because no one ever said those
words to me before---

MAC

I'll never stop saying them.

MRS. BRENNER

But we both know it's not true,
Mac. It just can't be true.

MAC

I love you.

MRS. Brenner

We don't even know each other.

MAC

I love you.

MRS. BRENNER

And those things take time.

MAC
I love you!

MRS. BRENNER
(weakening)
Years and years and ---

MAC
Susan Anne, our time is now.
We must live the moment,
completely. It's the only
thing we can be certain of.

MRS. BRENNER
...I'm so scared.

MAC
Of course you are, my dearest.
Life is a frightening experience.
Love is even worse.

MRS. BRENNER
My legs are shaking.

MAC
You won't fall, Susan Anne.
I'll never let you fall.

Suddenly, MRS. BRENNER ducks down, using MACKENZIE'S massive frame
as a shield. MACKENZIE grabs her by the arms.

MAC
You see, my darling.

MRS. BRENNER
(panicked)
Your wife!

MAC
What?

MRS. BRENNER
Your wife. I saw your wife.

MRS. BRENNER (con't)
Coming this way. I looked her
right in the eye.

MAC
(girding himself)
...All right...Perhaps this
is the test.

MRS. BRENNER
(struggling)
Mac! What are you doing!
She'll see us! For Lord
sakes, let go!

MAC
Not until you answer one question,
Susan Anne...Could you love me?

MRS. BRENNER
Not now, Mac! Please!

MAC
I want to hear it from your
lips. One way or the other.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac!

MAC
Yes or no.

MRS. BRENNER
...Yes!

MACKENZIE releases his grasp. MRS. BRENNER quickly composes
herself, and turns away from him.

MAC
Thank you, my love. You've
made me a happy man.

MRS. BRENNER
Go away!

MAC
I'll find you. Soon. We'll
make plans.

MACKENZIE glides off, disappearing into the crowd. MRS. BRENNER
looks around, shaken and dazed.

ANGLE - DANCE AREA
As TRACY FARRELL shows off her 'disco skills' with TONY BRIGGS,
the crowd responds, gradually clearing the floor for them.
(HUGHIE also defers to the 'stars', leaving ARIANNE who competes
alone for a few moments, before reluctantly stepping aside)

ANGLE - MUFFIN and DINO
Watching. MUFFIN'S smile belies a growing combative urge. Her
eyes remain glued to TRACY, as she speaks.

MUFFIN
Dino? Let's dance, honey.

DINO checks out the competition.

DINO
(downing his champagne)
Naa. Too frantic. Let the
pros have this one.

MUFFIN snuggles close to him.

MUFFIN
Come on, honey. Please. I
wanna show you off.

DINO
Gotta save my energy for
tonight.

MUFFIN
(suggestively)
Bull. I know better.

DINO
Oh yeah?...How?

MUFFIN
I just know.

She whispers in his ear. DINO starts to giggle.

DINO
...Come on...That tickles.

MUFFIN continues to nibble his ear.

MUFFIN
(purring)
...Dino dance with Muffy...
...Pretty please...

DINO
Okay...okay.

MUFFIN leads him to the dance floor...The 'competition' begins.

ANGLE - MACKENZIE GODDARD
Nopping his brow. As he takes a glass of champagne from a tray,
LOUIS comes up behind him, and places a hand on his shoulder.

LOUIS
Mac.

MAC jumps.

MAC
Oh...Louis. I'm sorry. You
startled me.

LOUIS
That's not a good sign, my
friend. A dead giveaway.

MAC
What?

LOUIS
If you're going to drive on
the ragged edge, you need
strong nerves...or a good
tranquilizer.

MAC
...Then, you know?

LOUIS
I have eyes. I see.

MAC
Louis, I can't help myself.
Nothing like this has ever
happened to me before. I'm
a man obsessed.

LOUIS
I understand, my friend, and of
course I wish you only happiness.

MAC
I appreciate that, Louis.

LOUIS
But I do hope you know what
you're doing. Because in my
country you'd have all the
symptoms of a man obsessed with
self-destruction.

MAC
...You mean Snooks?

LOUIS
Of course.

MAC

No, Louis. He doesn't give a damn about his wife. Believe me. He has other interests to occupy him...Look for yourself.

MAC gestures toward the dance area where MR. BRENNER and MOLLY ANNE are sharing one of their 'embraces'.

MAC

See what I mean...The blaggard.

LOUIS

Perhaps. But do proceed carefully. I would hate to lose an old friend on my son's wedding day.

MAC

Thank you, Louis.

LOUIS

Speaking of which...Are you in any shape to share...a very intimate confidence?

MAC

Of course, Louis. Anything. What is it?

LOUIS

I'll have to ask for your absolute silence on this, Mac. We've had a tragedy here today, and it's very important to me that Regina and the girls hear nothing about it until after the reception.

MAC

You have my word, Louis. You know that.

LOUIS puts his arm around MAC, drawing him aside for more privacy.

ANGLE - DANCE AREA

The fierce competition between MUFFIN and TRACY continues, both girls pulling out all stops in their efforts to outdo each other.

ANGLE - MR. BRENNER AND BUFFY
Cheering along with the crowd.

MR. BRENNER
(to Buffy)
Look at our baby strut. No
contest. No contest.
(shouting encouragement)
Come on, Muffin. Show your
stuff, sugar pie.

BUFFY
Let's you and me get out there,
Daddy.

MR. BRENNER
Not now, honey. It wouldn't be
fair.

BUFFY
Oh come on, daddy. We can dance
Miss Huffy right off the map.

MR. BRENNER
Sister's doing that just fine by
herself. She doesn't need any
help from us.
(again shouting)
Yiihaa! Show 'em, Muffin.
(to the person next to him)
that's my daughter out there.
(then)
Come on, baby. Do it!

BUFFY loses interest in the spectacle, and moves away through the crowd.

ANGLE - DANCE COMPETITION

Neither girl has the upper hand until TONY pairs off with MUFFIN, purposely slowing down their tempo to half-time, and thus, allowing DINO and TRACY to become the 'star attraction'. We might overhear some heated exchanges here.

ANGLE - MRS. BRENNER

Nervously scanning the room. CANDICE RUTELEDGE approaches her.

CANDICE

Susan Anne, I've got to have a talk with you right now.

MRS. BRENNER

Oh...Hon, can it wait? My hair's about to collapse, if I don't get a comb in it right---

CANDICE

No, it cannot wait. Not another minute. It's a family crisis. It's horrible.

MRS. BRENNER

Candice, what are you talking about?

CANDICE starts to whisper to her, when a SERVANT comes up to MRS. BRENNER with a note.

SERVANT

Excuse me, Mrs. Brenner. Mr. Goddard asked me to give you this.

MRS. BRENNER snatches the note.

MRS. BRENNER

Oh...Thank you...

She furtively attempts to read the contents of the note while talking to CANDICE.

CANDICE

Susan Anne...Brace yourself.
This is going to hurt...We just
found out BUFFY is pregnant...
by Dino.

MRS. BRENNER

(muddled)
...What? I'm...Candice, what
are you saying?

CANDICE

I know, I know. It's hard to
believe, but it's true. Your
daughter is carrying Dino's baby.

MRS. BRENNER

(agitated)
My daugh...Oh for goodness sakes,
Dandice, is that all?

CANDICE

Susan Anne Ruteledge Brenner!

MRS. BRENNER

Well, really, dear. It's just
nothing to get that excited about.
Lord's sakes. This is a new time,
Candice. Children are getting
married pregnant every day of the
week. We're just living in a
restless age, that's all.

CANDICE

Susan Anne, Buffy is not ma--

MRS. BRENNER

Candice, I don't want to hear any
more. Now I mean it. Being pregnant
on your wedding day may not be the
ideal, but it is also not the end of
the world.

CANDICE
Ooh...I can't believe my ears!

MRS. BRENNER
Well it's not, and you know
it perfectly well. Good glory,
for all I know, you were pregnant
too when you got married.

MRS. BRENNER moves away, leaving CANDICE sputtering. L

ELSEWHERE:

The SECURITY CHIEF reacts angrily to the sexy FEMALE VOICE purring provocative commands over his WALKIE TALKIE. (We will recognize this as BUFFY BRENNER, a la an X Rated Tokyo Rose). Snarling into his instrument, he calls each of his men, ordering the guilty party to identify himself. When all of them vow their innocence he addresses the 'young lady', reminding her that 'such frivolous acts could endanger the lives of the men, women and children we're here to protect.'

SHELBY MUNKER overhears some of this.

SHELBY
(to herself)
Good Lord. There is danger.
(calling out)
Amy!

SHELBY hurries off in search of her friend. She is stopped by KATHY SPAR.

KATHY
Do you have any grass?

SHELBY
What?!

KATHY
Is there any grass around
here?

SHELBY
Good Lord! Don't ask me.
(again, calling out)
Amy!

SHELBY runs off. KATHY shrugs.

ANGLE - DR. MEECHAM
REGINA spots him, and hurries over.

REGINA
Oh Jules, there you are.
(confidentially)
Jules? Is epilepsy something
you can inherit?

DR. MEECHAM
(a moment of thought, then)
Damned if I can recall...
(countering)
But I could look it up for
you.

ANGLE - PHILLIP MOSS (florist) and RITA
PHILLIP, in his usual apoplectic state, begs RITA for some
assistance outside where the winds are now whipping unchecked
through the buffet-tent, wreaking havoc on his delicate floral
arrangements. RITA soothes him, promising to speak to Ms.
Hellstrom.

ANGLE - DANCE AREA
MAE HELLSTROM is having her own party near the BANDSTAND. Laughing,
singing, rapping with the musicians (who all seem to know her.)
She hikes up her skirt, and begins to improvise a sultry folk
dance, much to the delight of the musicians, who encourage her
with shouts and gypsy-like riffs. RITA approaches, obviously taken
aback by MAE'S behavior.

RITA

Mae, dear. We need you
outside. Phillip's having
a terrible time with the
winds, and I promised him
you'd help get things under
control.

MAE

(dancing)

The winds? My dear Rita,
I cannot control the winds.
I am barely able to control the
lightning and thunder.

MAE continues to laugh and dance. RITA pursues her.

RITA

Mae, dear, I've been thinking.
Perhaps you were right. Perhaps
you should go home and get some
rest.

MAE

Nonsense. You cured me.
...Now...I celebrate.

MAE dances away from RITA, who looks after her with growing concern.

RITA

Oh, dear...

RITA makes her way over to LOUIS, who has been watching MAE.

RITA

Mr. Duarde, I'm afraid I
need your help.

LOUIS

You have it, Rita dear.
What can I do for you.

RITA

Well, we're running just a
smidge behind with the buffet.
So I thought, if you could
start off the toasts to the
bride and groom, it would
give us a bit more time to
catch up.

LOUIS

Of course. I'd be happy to...
Tony Briggs give the first toast,
now that he's here.

RITA

Well, technically, yes. But
you filled in so nicely for him
at the church...I'd feel more
secure if you handled this.

LOUIS

Very well. I'd be delighted.

RITA

Oh thank you. That will be lovely.

ANGLE - ORCHESTRA

They finish their set. LOUIS steps up to the bandstand, and
takes the microphone.

LOUIS

Ladies and gentlemen. My dear
friends...and honored guests.
At this time, I would like to invite
all of you to join me in a toast...
to our bride and groom. My
wonderfulson, Dino...my beautiful new
daughter...Muffin.

ANGLE - TONY BRIGGS AND TRACY FARRELL

TONY
(to Tracy)
Anybody here want a toasted
muffin?

TRACY laughs, perhaps, with some effort. TONY moves away.

ANGLE - LOUIS
He raises his glass, and begins a lengthy, animated and moving
toast...in ITALIAN. During this,

ANGLE - SHELBY MUNKER AND HUGH BRENNER

SHELBY
Listen to that. God, he's
beautiful...It's scary.

HUGHIE reacts.

ANGLE - BEATRICE SLOAN CORY AND VICTORIA (daughter) listening to
LOUIS.

VICTORIA
If he didn't speak quite so fast,
I could almost follow what he's
saying.

BEATRICE
Why bother? Nobody else can.

ANOTHER ANGLE
As LOUIS finishes toasting, and drinks to the newlyweds, the guests
respond with enthusiastic applause. MACKENZIE draws ANTOINETTE
aside.

MAC

Dearest, I need a word with you. I've just received some very distressing news.

ANGLE - LOUIS

LOUIS

And now, dear friends, it gives me great pride to step aside and turn the microphone over to my son, Dino, who will deliver the next toast...to his bride...Dino. Come up here.. Ladies and gentlemen I give you... the groom.

Much hooting and applause as DINO mounts the bandstand, taking the microphone from his father. (We should be able to detect the first evidences of Dino's drinking.)

DINO

Thanks, dad. I'm not very good at this...but,
(raising his glass)
I would like to propose a toast to my wife, Muffin...
(a momentary outburst of the giggles, then,)
Scuse me...To the most wonderful girl I've ever met. I hope our life together...will be as beautiful as you are...she is.

DINO shrugs, then drinks the entire glass of champagne, and the GUESTS applaud enthusiastically. During this,

ANGLE - TONY BRIGGS

He pours his champagne over the head of an unsuspecting BUNK LEMAY. CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT witnesses the act.

ENSTEDT

Briggs! That was totally
uncalled for. You're way out
of line.

TONY

Oh, really?

ENSTEDT

You'd better mind your manners,
young man. In case you've
forgotten, you're a guest in
this house.

TONY

Well, in case you've forgotten,
sir, we're not at the academy
any more. So if you don't like
the way I'm behaving...you can
just stuff it.

ENSTEDT

I'm warning you, Briggs. I
won't take any of your lip today.

TONY

(a knowing laugh)
...But you'd love to, wouldn't
you.

TONY mockingly throws CAPT. ENSTEDT a kiss, and moves away.

ANGLE - LOUIS at the microphone.

LOUIS

I would like to take this
moment to call a very dear
friend and honored guest to
the microphone. A great man,
distinguished clergyman, and
spiritual advisor to our family
for more than two generations.

LOUIS (con't)
Bishop Andrew Martin. Bishop
Martin, will you honor us once
again with a blessing for our
bride and groom?

LOUIS leads the guests in applause.

ANGLE - BISHOP MARTIN standing next to CLARICE and MR. BRENNER.

BISHOP
(to Mr. Brenner)
What's he talking about?

MR. BRENNER
I think he wants you to bless
the bride and groom.

BISHOP
I already did that.

MR. BRENNER
Well...uh...

CLARICE
(jumping in)
Oh, it would mean so much to
all of us, Bishop Martin. Truly
it would.

BISHOP
Nobody said anything about
a blessing.

CLARICE
Oh please.

BISHOP MARTIN moves off toward the bandstand.

ANGLE - CANDICE cornering RITA.

CANDICE
(bristling)
Miss Billingsly. On behalf
of my family, I really must
protest this.

RITA
What, dear?

CANDICE
My husband, Reverend Ruteledge,
was very gracious and understanding
about not being invited to perform
the ceremony today. But to
deliberately pass him by for the
second time, in favor of an
Episcopalian, no offense to Bishop
Martin, is an insult to my entire
family and the Baptist Church.

RITA
Oh, my dear. Then by all means.
You must ask Reverend Ruteledge
to give us a Baptist blessing.
That would be thrilling.

CANDICE
It's only fair and just,
you know.

RITA
Yes, indeed. It'll be lovely.
An unexpected pleasure. Now,
you really must excuse me, dear.

RITA scurries off.

ANGLE - BANDSTAND
LOUIS assists BISHOP MARTIN to the bandstand.

BISHOP
(to Louis)
What's the bride's name?

LOUIS
Muffin. Muffin and Dino.

BISHOP
I know that.

BISHOP MARTIN takes his place before the microphone.

BISHOP
Dearly beloved...We are
gathered here today to
celebrate the coming together
of two young people...Dino
and Muffin...in the sacred
bond of holy matrimony...

THE GUESTS' attention becomes more and more focused on the
RAGING WINDS outside. The Duardes' GOLDEN RETRIEVER bays
like a coyote.

BISHOP (con't)
It is a time for rejoicing...
A time...
(momentary lapse of memory)
A time for...great rejoicing...

As BISHOP MARTIN falters, he immediately starts pulling at the
cuffs of his shirt looking for cues. During this, the WINDS
continue to howl outside. Excited MURMURS run through the hall.

BISHOP (con't)
(reading from his cuff)
...Who gives this woman?-- No.
That's not it.
(trying the other cuff)
We are gathered here today--
Hmm...
(another try, then, shaking his head)
I can't read this.

BISHOP MARTIN, hopelessly lost, finally retreats to the safest place, bowing his head in prayer.

BISHOP
Let us pray. Our Father
which art in heaven...

During this (the Lord's Prayer), the GUESTS react with growing alarm to the storm outside. The SKY DARKENS ominously, and gusts of wind rattle against the huge dutch doors of the room. BISHOP MARTIN, his eyes closed, and hearing nothing, plows ahead.

BISHOP
Give us this day our daily
bread...

Suddenly, a WINDOW BLOWS OPEN, shattering several panes of glass. There is a flurry of excitement. SERVANTS drop their trays, and scurry for cover. CHILDREN run screaming to their parents. More windows blow open. RITA and LOUIS try to calm the guests, but their efforts are in vain, as the men, women, and children become swept up in the excitement of the moment.

JIM HAVOR and AMY MCDERMOTT, their clothes dishevelled, run in from outside.

Most of the guests move away from the windows, pressing themselves against the back walls of the room. The more adventurous souls crouch beside the dutch doors, watching as the swirling winds batter and rip the giant BUFFET TENT outside.

BISHOP MARTIN, oblivious to it all, continues to drone out The Lord's Prayer.

The SECURITY CHIEF (JEFF KUYKENDAL) runs in, and commandeers the microphone from BISHOP MARTIN.

CHIEF

Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention...Attention, please! There is no reason to panic. My men and I have the situation well in hand. For your own safety, certain precautionary measures will be taken until the tornado warnings can be confirmed. Now I repeat, there is no reason for alarm. These are strictly precautionary measures. So I urge you all to remain calm and to follow our instructions. I repeat. Remain calm and obey. Silence, please!

The CHIEF issues the following commands: all guests are to congregate in the center of the room, staying clear of the windows and the possibility of falling glass...women and children will proceed in an orderly fashion to the basement of the house until notified that the danger has passed. The CHIEF then calls for able bodied male volunteers to assist his men in securing the buffet tent outside.

One by one the 'heroes' step forward. RUSSELL GERASCH, BUNKY LENAY, EDWARD CLINTON, WILL FARRELL, JIM HAVOR.

CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT, reticent to expose his uniform to the elements, involves himself with the evacuation of the women and children.

MACKENZIE GODDARD, over ANTOINETTE'S objections, insists on joining the 'rescue party.'

MRS. BRENNER watches MAC with the pride and trepidation of a 'war bride'.

CANDICE RUTELEDGE organizes the children, and they march off together in single file.

RANDOLPH soothes the servants, and RITA keeps the BAND playing.

Amidst the bedlam, DAVID RUTELEDGE moves to the bandstand, and takes over the microphone. His moment has come. With his arms outstretched and eyes heavenward, he launches into an impassioned 'Sunday-Meetin', hallelujah-like prayer that gradually builds to a crescendo of evangelical hysteria.

OUTSIDE, the men, platooned around the buffet tent, struggle valiantly against the raging winds which threaten to uproot it. They are cheered on by their respective FAMILY MEMBERS and FEMALE ADMIRERS.

ANGLE - BEATRICE CORY AND VICTORIA
VICTORIA faints dead away. DR. NEECHAM calls to the NURSE at the top of the staircase, instructing her to bring down his 'little black bag'. BEATRICE, totally unperturbed by her daughter's condition, bombards DR. NEECHAM with memories of the 'good old days', while he administers to VICTORIA.

BEATRICE
That's my daughter, all right.
Poor baby's always been as frail
as a twig. First sign of danger,
and whamo, out like a light.
Suppose it doesn't matter much
nowadays, but she wouldn't have
lasted ten minutes in our time.
Right, Jules? I remember back
when John Cory and I were caught
in a real tornado. We were on our
way to a dance social at Twin Pine,
all dressed up in our Sunday best,
when out of nowhere this black cloud
as big as a mountain came thundering
across the prairie at us, roaring
like a locomotive. John reined up
the buggy, set the horses loose,
and told me to lay down flat in this ditch
by the road. Well, there I was, face
down in the mud, party dress and all,

BEATRICE (con't)
my John right beside me. And
we stayed there, and let that
big black hell pass right over
us...

INT. BASEMENT STUDY

CANDICE RUTELEDGE leads the CHILDREN in a rousing chorus of
"Heavenly Sunlight".

INT. MAIN ROOM

As REGINA makes her way up the staircase.

UPSTAIRS

REGINA knocks on the bedroom door.

REGINA

Mother? It's Regina. Are
you all right?
(again knocking)
Mother?

REGINA enters the room.

BACK TO MAIN ROOM

DR. MEECIAM brings VICTORIA a chair, while the NURSE administers
smelling salts. RITA rushes over with a cup of tea. BEATRICE
continues her reminiscence.

BEATRICE

The buggy was in a million
pieces, the horses were gone,
and John turned to me and said,
"Brush yourself off, Beatrice.
We're walking". And we did.
All the way to Twin Pine. We
walked right in to that Social as
if nothin had happened. Caked
with mud from head to foot, but

BEATRICE (con't)
lookin them all straight in
the eye. And not a one of them
nobody, said a word. Didn't
dare. They knew about John's
temper. Even for those days
he was a mean son of a bitch.
(to Victoria)
Feelin better, honey bun?

The storm seems to be subsiding, and already the SERVANTS are
setting up the buffet tables and bringing in platters of food
from outside.

ANGLE - STAIRCASE

REGINA, looking drawn and pale, clutches the bannister for support
as she descends the stairs into the main hall. There, she
whispers something to her maid, VERNA.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MAIN ROOM

One by one, the VOLUNTEERS reenter. Flushed with triumph (the
tent is secure!). They are given heroes' welcomes by their
respective FAMILIES and FEMALE ADMIRERS. The CHIEF OF SECURITY
might make an announcement that the 'danger has passed, and
the situation is now well in hand.'

ANGLE - DR. MEECHAM

VERNA tells DR. MEECHAM that REGINA wants to see him immediately
in the 'gift room'.

DR. MEECHAM
...The gift room?

VERNA
That's what she told me. She
said it was very important.

(NOTE: From this point on, DR. MEECHAM will never be without
his 'little black bag'.)

BUFFET AREA

RITA and OSCAR EDWARDS (the black chef) supervise the buffet tables, as the GUESTS, ravenous from their ordeal, gorge themselves with the bountiful foods. LOUIS circulates among them, as always, the benevolent host.

ANGLE - MAE HELLSTROM

Washing down a pill with champagne, as LOUIS approaches her.

LOUIS

Ms. Hellstrom, I must congratulate you on all of this. It's truly extraordinary, considering the obstacles you've had to face. And I thank you, on behalf of my entire family.

MAE dips into an exaggerated curtsy, offering LOUIS her hand.

LOUIS (con't)

I don't know what your secret is, but you are, indeed, a miracle worker.

MAE throws back her head in laughter.

MAE

Oh my goodness, I must be. I even fooled you.

LOUIS

...Fooled me?

MAE

My dear Mr. Duarde. What would you say if I told you I had nothing at all to do with any of this.

LOUIS

I would have to say that you are much too modest.

MAE

Well, it happens to be the truth.

LOUIS

Come now, Ms. Hellstrom, I know better. The evidence is all around me.

MAE

Oh, but you're wrong.
You see, that's my secret.
(confidentially)
I'm not a cateress at all.
Never have been.

LOUIS laughs, enjoying this.

MAE (con't)

You laugh, but it's a fact.
I don't know the first thing
about menues or food preparation
or purchasing or favors...
(pointing toward Oscar)
Mr. Edwards. He does all of
that. He is the real caterer.
I am just...his employee.

LOUIS

Now I know you are joking with
me.

MAE

No, not at all. You see, I am,
what they call, a 'front'. I
get the jobs. For Oscar. My
talent...is my breeding, my
European charm. I shouldn't have
to tell you, that it works wonders.
And I'm very good at what I do.
Oh yes. I've made many friends
over the years...many influential
contacts. A reputation, you see.
To the point, now, where Oscar needs
me. As a matter of fact, he really
couldn't do without me. You might
say I've become an indispensable
employee...But still, I am a fake.
I'm surprised that you didn't
recognize that.

LOUIS

(smiling)
Amazing. You're really quite
amazing.

MAE

Thank you...I think that
you are very good at what
you do, too, Mr. Duarde.

LOUIS

Please...call me Louis.

MAE

Louis... Oh, yes. You
and I, Louis...We are very
much alike, aren't we?

LOUIS

...European charm?

MAE

Indispensible employees.

LOUIS

I'm not quite sure how
I should take that.

MAE

(laughing)

Don't try to hide from
me...I'm challenging you
Louis.

LOUIS

I know that, Mae.

(kissing her hand)

And now you must excuse
me. There's work to
be done.

LOUIS moves away to circulate among the guests, once
again, the charming host.

INT. BASEMENT

CANDICE and the CHILDREN are still singing when DAVID
RUTELEDGE enters.

DAVID

Praise the Lord, my children.
The crisis has passed. We
are safe now.

The CHILDREN cheer and applaud.

DAVID (CONT'D)
And there's a whole lot of
good food being served
upstairs, in case anyone
here might be hungry.

The excited CHILDREN scamper out of the room.
CANDICE embraces her husband.

CANDICE
Oh David, I'm so glad
you're here.

DAVID
Courage, Candice, courage.
And He leadeth us from
the valley of darkness--

CANDICE
David, listen to me. I
told Susan Anne about
Buffy's condition...in
the most charitable way
I could, David, believe me.

DAVID
Well of course you did,
dearest.

CANDICE
David, she said she
didn't care.

DAVID
What?!

CANDICE
Your sister looked me
straight in the eye, and
said she did not care...
that young people were
doing things like that
all the time these days.

DAVID
Lord have mercy. That
doesn't sound like
Susan Anne.

CANDICE
I swear to you and the
Almighty, David, those
were her words. Futhermore
she accused me of being
pregnant when we got married.

DAVID
Well that's just downright
nonsense. Isn't it.

CANDICE
Of course it it!

DAVID
Calmness, Candice, calmness.
Now, we have done our very
best to bring this situation
into the light. Therefore,
our moral obligation is
fulfilled, both in the eyes of--

CANDICE
Not until you tell Snooks,
David.

DAVID
...Dearest, I really do
think that would be very
unwise, considering the way
he feels about Buffy. Not
to mention the way he feels
about me.

CANDICE
David Ruteledge, you don't
have to fear any man alive.
Least of all, Snooks Brenner.
I heard the blessing you gave
during the storm, David.
Your words came soaring
down here to this room and
I got goose bumps all over.
You have the power, David.

DAVID
Candice, we're not talkin
about fear, and we're not
talkin about power. We're
talkin about good sense,
that's all.

INT. GIFT ROOM
REGINA sits, staring blankly at the wall, her hands
tightly clenched on the arms of her chair. She is
shaking. DR. MEECHAM knocks on the door, then enters.

DR. MEECHAM
Regina?

She continues to stare straight ahead.

DR. MEECHAM
Verna said you wanted to see
me.

REGINA
(flatly)
I need you, Jules. Lock
the door.

DR. MEECHAM
(checking his watch)
It's too soon, Regina. It
hasn't even been four hours.

REGINA
(exploding)
Jules! I need you now.

INT. MAIN ROOM
The USHERS take turns toasting DINO and MUFFIN while
they eat. DINO is getting very drunk, and can barely
stand without weaving.

TONY BRIGGS and TRACY FARRELL, seated together, watch the disintegration of the groom with amusement. LOUIS comes over to their table, and hands TONY the newlyweds' CAR KEYS and MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.

LOUIS
Tony, it's time I stepped down as your substitute, and turned these over to you. The car keys. The marriage certificate.

TONY
You don't have to, Mr. Duarde. You've been filling in just fine.

LOUIS
No, no. You're the "best man", Tony. These are your responsibilities now. And I think Dino can use all the help you can give him.

TONY
Looks that way, doesn't it.

LOUIS
(indicating the certificate)
Be sure he takes this with him, Tony. We want everything to be legal, you know.

TONY
No problem, Mr. Duarde. You can count on me.

LOUIS
I know that.

LOUIS pats him on the shoulder, and moves away.

ANGLE - CAKE TABLE

MELBA LEAR (the "dove lady") corners RITA, insisting that the cake-cutting ceremony must start at once. She refuses to keep her doves 'cooper up inside' any longer, because they're running dangerously low of oxygen.

RITA

All right, dear, I'll take
care of it. Just relax now.
It's going to be lovely.

INT. HALLWAY

ANTIONETTE is trying to locate Regina. She moves along
the hallway, looking into rooms, and inquiring after
her sister's whereabouts. She comes to a door that is
locked, and calls out. DR. MEECHAM answers from within.
He tells her he hasn't seen Regina.

ANTIONETTE

Why is the door locked, Jules?

DR. MEECHAM (O.S.)

I'm with a patient.

ANTIONETTE

Well if you see Regina, tell
her I want to speak with her.
It's terribly important.

INT. GIFT ROOM

as DR. MEECHAM injects MORPHINE into REGINA'S ARM.

DR. MEECHAM

All right, my dear. I'll
do that.

INT. MAIN ROOM

LOUIS is trying to calm MAE HELLSTROM, who, at the
moment, is overcome by a rush of 'amphetamine panic'.

LOUIS

Mae, it's no trouble whatsoever.
Now, Dr. Meecham will examine
you, and put all your fears
to rest.

MAE

I'm so embarrassed.

LOUIS
There's no need to be.

MAE
I don't know what's come
over me...Must be the
excitement. My heart's
just racing.

FRANK (the butler) arrives.

FRANK
Mr. Duarde, I can't seem
to find Dr. Meecham.

LOUIS
All right, Frank. Take
Ms. Hellstrom to Arianne's
room where she won't be
disturbed.

FRANK
Yes, sir.

LOUIS
You go along with Frank,
Mae. Just lie down and
relax, and I'll send Dr.
Meecham to your room as
soon as I find him.

MAE
You see, Louis. You
are indispensable.

LOUIS
And you are very charming.
Go on now.

FRANK leads MAE away.

ANGLE - MACKENZIE GODDARD
carrying a plate of 'goodies' over to MRS. BRENNER.

MAC
Some sweets...my sweetness?

MRS. BRENNER
Mac...

MAC
Take some. It will
look natural.

MRS. BRENNER proceeds to eat non-stop from MAC'S
plate while they converse.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, this has got to stop.
My nervous system just isn't
geared for sneaking around.

MAC
I know. It's unbearable for
me, too, my dearest. We
need time together. Whole
days and nights.

MRS. BRENNER
Mac, please. Please listen
to me. I've thought it over
very carefully...and I've
decided...

MAC
Yes, my darling?

MRS. BRENNER
I've decided I just couldn't
live through an affair with
another man...I really
couldn't, Mac. I'd die of
the guilts.

MAC
Susan Anne. My dearest
Susan Anne, is that what you
think I want from you? An
affair of the flesh? Oh
my God...

MRS. BRENNER
Well...Isn't it, Mac?

MAC

No, my darling. I would die before asking you to compromise your principles for me. Raymand Duchamp'villon, one of the great French sculptors during the First World War, said it all from his deathbed, felled by a German bullet...I quote, "Without our ptinciples, we are barbarians."

MRS. BRENNER

...That's beautiful, Mac.

MAC

Susan Anne, my love for you goes far beyond affairs of the flesh. I want to probe your mind, your soul. I want to walk with you in fresh m meadows, hand in hand, sharing thoughts and fears and dreams... And, perhaps, at day's end, rest my head upon your lap... and weep.

MRS. BRENNER

(moved)

Oh, Mac...Maybe,...Maybe I could manage something like that without the guilts.

MAC

Tell me where and when. I'll be there.

MRS. BRENNER

Oh...Well, I don't...I don't know. I have to think.

MAC

Hurry, my love. Our time is short. Find me when you're ready.

MAC glides away, disappearing into the crowd.

ANGLE - CAKE TABLE

THE FILMMAKERS and STILL PHOTOGRAPHER have set up for the 'cake ceremony', and the GUESTS, herded on by RITA, crowd around the table for a closer look at the 14 foot mountain of white goo.

KATHY SPAR edges close to AMY MCDERMOTT.

KATHY

Is there any grass around here?

AMY

Grass? You mean Marijuana grass?

KATHY

Yeah, right.

AMY

Good Lord, I don't know. They've got just about everything else. It wouldn't surprise me... Why don't you ask Miss Billingsly.

ANGLE - CAKE TABLE

MUFFIN and DINO climb the ladder next to the cake. DINO, very drunk now, has problems with his balance, but manages to take his place at the top next to his bride. THE ORCHESTRA plays a drum' roll fanfare, and on a cue from RITA, the newlyweds open the top of the cake. FOURTEEN WHITE DOVES flutter up to the ceiling. A burst of applause and barrage of flashbulbs celebrate the moment. Next

Off to the side, CANDICE tlaks to MR. BRENNER, who listens, grimfaced.

MUFFIN stuffs the first bite of cake into DINO'S mouth. More applause and flashbulbs.

MELBA LEAR (dove lady) reacts when she spots ONE OF THE DOVES on the floor, injured. But before she can reach it, the Duarde's GOLDEN RETRIEVER scoops it up in his mouth and takes off. MELBA becomes hysterical, and is restrained by RITA.

THE SECURITY CHIEF, alerted by the commotion, springs into action, calling his men to a 'converging' maneuver on the lawn area, and pursuing the dog as it scampers out of the room.

RITA
(to Melba)
Please don't worry, Melba dear. I promise you. That beautiful dog wouldn't dream of harming your bird. He'll be back in no time, beleive me. It's going to be lovely.

RITA turns, and sees KATHY SPAR waiting to talk to her.

RITA
Yes, dear. Did you want me for something?

KATHY
(a change of heart)
Uh, no. That's okay.
Forget it.

ANGLE - DR. MEECHAM
as he reenters the room, LOUIS intercepts him and informs him about MAE HELLSTROM'S condition - DR. MEECHAM proceeds immediately upstairs.

INT. HALLWAY - BATHROOM DOOR
ANTOINETTE opens the door to the BATHROOM, revealing CLARICE and RANDOLPH, locked in a passionate embrace. Startled, they instantly disengage themselves, but their guilt and embarrassment is apparant. ANTIONETTE hardly misses a beat. CLARICE is dumbstruck.

ANTIONETTE

Oh, Randolph. I really haven't had a chance to say hello, yet.

RANDOLPH

It's always a pleasure seeing you, Mrs. Goddard. I trust you had a comfortable flight.

ANTIONETTE

How have you been? You're looking very well.

RANDOLPH

Just fine, thank you, Mrs. Goddard. I wouldn't be better.

ANTIONETTE

Clarice, as soon as I find Regina, I want to speak to you both, alone. It's important, dear, so don't run off.

ANTIONETTE leaves. CLARICE agonizes.

INT. MAIN ROOM - CAKE TABLE

DINO has just thrown up behind the CAKE TABLE, a spectacle which has caused much gawking and whispered asides. However, no one seems very willing or able to assist the floundering groom. Even MUFFIN finds it difficult to lend a hand to her soiled mate. Finally, CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT steps forward, takes his ex student by the arm and leads him upstairs for 'repairs'.
DURING THIS,

ANGLE - GOLDEN RETRIEVER

The Duarde's GOLDEN RETRIEVER, with DOVE still in mouth, scampers back into the room, followed closely by the 'never say die' SECURITY CHIEF. The chase ends abruptly, as the DOG deposits its catch in BEATRICE CORY'S lap. RITA rushes over and recovers the flapping bird. Holding it at arm's length, she takes it across the room to EMLBA LEAR.

RITA

Melba, dear. Look who's back.
Safe and sound. Isn't it
lovely?

ANOTHER ANGLE

REGINA wanders into the room, looking glassy-eyed.
ANTIONETTE immediately corners her, turns her around
on the spot and steers her out of the room.

ANGLE - MACKENZIE GODDARD

MRS. BRENNER inches up beside him, speaking in hushed
tones.

MRS. BRENNER

Mac...My aunt has a little
farm outside Gurneyville. It's
been ages since I've paid her
a visit, but--

MAC

Gurneyville.. Oh my darling,
it sound like heaven.

MRS. BRENNER

Mac, I'm shaking like a leaf.

MAC

I'll meet you there. Tell
me where I can stay.

MRS. BRENNER

I don't know if I can go through
with this, Mac. I really don't.

MAC

Where, Susan Anne.

MRS. BRENNER

Well...There's a little motel
across from the Foster's Freeze,
but--

MAC

Perfect. I'll be there. When.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh Mac, this is wrong. It's all
wrong. I just feel it.

MAC
Tell me when, Susan Anne.

MRS. BRENNER
We can't, Mac. We'll both
hate ourselves for the rest
of our lives.

MAC
When will you be there.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh Mac....

MAC
Susan Anne, when.

MRS. BRENNER
Two weeks from today.

MAC
Perfect. It's done. Gurneyville.
Two weeks from today. You and
I, Susan Anne. Rapture.

MAC disappears into the crowd.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh my God.

ANGLE - LOUIS
MR. BRENNER approaches him, grim faced.

MR. BRENNER
Louis, where can I have
some privacy around here.

LOUIS
Privacy, Snooks?

MR. BRENNER
Family business. I don't
want any interruptions.

LOUIS
I see. Well, perhaps you'd
like to use my study in
the basement.

MR. BRENNER
Yeah, that sounds okay.

LOUIS
Just make yourself at home,
Snooks. Whatever is mine
is yours now.

MR. BRENNER
Yeah. I might have something
to say about that later.

MR. BRENNER moves off, abruptly. LOUIS watches, puzzled.

INT. ARIANNE'S ROOM

MAE HELLSTROM is on the bed. DR. MEECHAM monitors her
pulse and heartbeat with a stethoscope.

DR. MEECHAM
How many of those little
white pills did you take?

MAE
Three..four...maybe five.
I don't remember.

DR. MEECHAM

And you never bothered to ask
what they were?

MAE

Oh, I might have. I don't
know. It didn't seem
important at the time.

DR. MEECHAM

An adventurous soul, aren't
you.

MAE

What's wrong with me, doctor?

DR. MEECHAM

Nothing too serious. . You've
O. D.'d on uppers, that's
all.

MAE

My God...What should I do?

DR. MEECHAM

There's nothing much you can
do. Just go with it...and
enjoy the high.

INT. MAIN ROOM - STAIRCASE

RITA is organizing the "bouquet throw" at the foot of
the staircase, gathering together the BRIDESMAIDS and
other GUESTS. MUFFIN waits alone at the top of the
stairs, looking a bit weary from the day's events.
Another DRUM ROLL alerts the other GUESTS.

ANGLE - SECURITY CHIEF

The CHIEF reacts to a "red alert" signal over his
WALKIE-TALKIE. One of his men reports he was forced
to subdue a gate-crasher. The CHIEF springs into
action, sprinting outside.

BACK TO ANGLE - STAIRCASE

On RITA'S cue, MUFFIN throws her bouquet. It lands at TRACY FARRELL'S feet.

TRACY, making no effort to pick it up, turns and stalks off.

BUFFY BRENNER triumphantly snatches up the bouquet, but MR. BRENNER grabs it out of her hand and throws it back to the squealing BRIDESMAIDS.

BUFFY
Daddy!?

MR. BRENNER
(seething)
I want to talk to you, young lady. Right now.

BUFFY
But daddy--

MR. BRENNER
I said now.

MRS. BRENNER arrives on the scene, but her husband ignores her, and proceeds to drag BUFFY out of the room. CANDICE and DAVID approach.

MRS. BRENNER
What on earth is going on?
Why is Snooks so angry?

CANDICE
Susan Anne, I'm sorry, but I had a moral obligation to tell him about Buffy.

MRS. BRENNER
What are you talking about, Candice? What about Buffy?

CANDICE

You know very well what I'm talking about, Susan Anne. I came to you first. But when I told you Buffy was pregnant, you didn't seem--

MRS. BRENNER

What!

CANDICE

Now don't pretend you didn--

MRS. BRENNER

My God! My baby!

MRS. BRENNER rushes after her husband. On the way, she grabs her sister-in-law, ELEANOR BRENNER SPAR.

MRS. BRENNER

Eleanor, I need you. Hurry!

The two women rush out of the room. CANDICE seizes DAVID by the arm, dragging him along in pursuit.

(NOTE: During this, the "bouquet throw" bedlam continues, with MUFFIN throwing her garter to the assembled USHERS.)

ANGLE - TONY BRIGGS AND TRACY FARRELL

TONY

I thought you handled that with a lot of class.

TRACY

(fuming)

God, I'd like to pluck her eyes out. She did that deliberately to humiliate me in front of everyone. Little tinsel-mouthed bitch.

TONY
Stay cool now. You'll blow
the image.

TRACY
I don't know why I even came
here in the first place.

TONY
For laughs, babe. What else?

TRACY
Oh, yeah. Tons of laughs.

TONY
Well, they don't come easily
you know. Not the big ones
anyway. A really good laugh
takes imagination and planning.

TRACY
I need some champagne.

TONY
Excellent idea. Also very
inspiring to the imagination.

EXT. DUARDE ESTATE

Two SECURITY GUARDS stand over the body of a DARK HAIRE
YOUNG MAN. He is badly beaten, his European cut, pin-
striped suit spattered with blood. As the CHIEF runs up,
they hand him an identity card, nervously trying to
justify their error. The "crasher" they've discovered,
is ANTHONY DUARDE, Mr. Duarde's kid brother from Italy.
The CHIEF explodes at their stupidity. They alibi...
the guy looked like a hood...didn't respond to their
commands...got rough when they tried to stop him...
They didn't have any choice. The CHIEF slams one GUARD
against a tree, cursing him for "blowing" the biggest
fee they've ever had.

GUARD
How were we supposed to know?
You never told us he had a
brother.

CHIEF

I never told you he had a dog either, dummy. I'm surprised you didn't shoot the goddamn thing!

The CHIEF then fires the GUARD on the spot, ordering him off the property at once. He commands the other guard to carry the semi-conscious Duarde back to the house. "Use the back entrance, and call the doctor." The CHIEF will inform Mr. Duarde.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS

MUFFIN has changed into her travelling outfit. Moving down the hall, she knocks on the door to DINO'S room.

MUFFIN

Dino?...Hon, are you ready?
...Dino?

She opens the door.

INT. DINO'S ROOM

MUFFIN enters the empty room, and immediately spots CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT'S dress uniform folded neatly over a chair. In the adjoining BATHROOM, a SHOWER IS RUNNING.

MUFFIN

Dino? Are you in there?

She moves toward the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM

As MUFFIN enters. The sound of DINO giggling hysterically in the SHOWER almost drowns out CAPT. ENSTEDT'S intimate coaxing. MUFFIN advances timidly.

CAPT. ENSTEDT (O.S.)
Come on, big fella. You've
gotta help me here. I can't
hold you forever, Dino. All
right, let's get serious.

DINO (O.S.)
(laughing)
You're tickling me...

MUFFIN flings open the SHOWER DOOR.

INT. SHOWER - DINO AND CAPT. ENSTEDT
momentarily frozen in an awkward embrace. CAPT.
ENSTEDT has both arms wrapped around the slumping
DINO.

MUFFIN reacts, horrorstruck, then with a cry, dashes
out of the room.

INT. GIFT ROOM - ANTOINETTE, REGINA, CLARICE

REGINA is seated, staring dreamily around the room.
CLARICE taps her foot nervously. ANTOINETTE closes the
door, turning the lock.

CLARICE
Don't bother locking the
door, Tony. I'm not staying.

ANTOINETTE
I beg your pardon.

CLARICE
I know what you're going to
say, and I'm not interested.

ANTOINETTE
Clarice.....

CLARICE

And don't talk down to me.
I've had a very trying day,
and I'm in no mood to listen
to a lecture from "big sister".

ANTOINETTE

What on earth are you talking
about? I have something very
important to say to both of...

CLARICE

I don't want to hear it!
My God! I'm a grown woman,
Tony! Not a little girl.
You think you can just drop
in here once a year and start
running my life...

ANTIONETTE

Will you shut up, please, and
listen to what I have to say!

CLARICE

I don't care what you have to
say! It's none of your business.
What I do in my personal life
doesn't concern you at all.

ANTIONETTE

I'm not going to talk about
your personal life, Clarice.
I don't give a damn about your
personal life!

REGINA, in a "morphine daze", looks from one to
the other.

REGINA

What is it you'd like to talk
about, dear?

ANTOINETTE

Well, if our dear sister would
stop having a tantrum, I'd be
more than happy to tell you!

INT. BASEMENT - MRS. BRENNER, ELEANOR, DAVID AND
CANDICE huddled around the door to the STUDY.

MRS. BRENNER
(knocking)
Snooks, it's Susan Anne.
Please let me in. Can you
hear me, dear?

INT. STUDY - MR. BRENNER AND BUFFY

BUFFY, near tears. MR. BRENNER, boiling.

MR. BRENNER
This is between me and Buffy,
Susan Anne. It doesn't concern
you.

BUFFY
(calling out)
Yes it does, mother. I want
you here.

MR. BRENNER
(to Buffy)
Now you listen to me...

BUFFY
(backing away from
her father)
I want mother in the room,
daddy. I'm not going to
answer any questions unless
she's here.

MR. BRENNER
(stalking her)
Oh yes you will, young lady.
You're not giving the orders
around here. You understand?
I'm your father. You'll do
as I say!

He grabs for her, but she eludes him.

BUFFY
(crying)
Stop it, daddy. You're
scaring me. Please...

MR. BRENNER
And don't start that
crying stuff with me.
Not this time, babe.
It's not going to work.
I want some answers, and
I want 'em now!

BUFFY
No!....Mother, help me!
Stop him!

MR. BRENNER
Will you shut your mouth!?
(shouting to the door)
Shut up, all of you! I'm
trying to have a private
discussion here with my
own daughter. So just
hold your horses. I'll
open the goddamn door when
I'm good and ready!

MRS. BRENNER (O.S.)
Snooks, whatever it is,
we can talk it over with-
out screaming and yelling.
Now please open the door.

ELEANOR (O.S.)
Snooks, this is Elie.
Look if we've got a family
problem, let's work it out
as a family. We're all
here. Candice and Dav---

MRS. BRENNER (O.S.)
Snooks, please! God, don't
hurt her!

INT. MAIN ROOM
A grim faced LOUIS strides across the room, followed
closely by the SECURITY CHIEF who is talking fast,
nervously apologizing for his men's stupidity, and
vowing even to testify against them, should Louis
decide to take any legal action.

INT. GIFT ROOM - ANTOINETTE, REGINA, CLARICE

ANTIONETTE
(offended)
I didn't come here to criticize
anyone. Certainly not my own
family. I've always tried to be
a loving sister. God knows, it
wasn't easy being the eldest.

REGINA

Is that what you wanted to
talk about, darling?

ANTOINETTE

No! I didn't call you here
to talk about myself...or
Clarice!

REGINA

(placating)

All right, dear. You tell
us. We'll listen.

ANTOINETTE

Thank you, Regina.

(after a moment)

It's about mother...She's ...

REGINA

Dead.

ANTOINETTE

Regina!

CLARICE

She is dead.

ANTOINETTE

(exploding)

Will you stop putting words
in my mouth, and give me
the courtesy of finishing
what I have to say?

REGINA

.....Isn't she dead, dear?

ANTOINETTE

No! She isn't! She isn't
dead. She's...She's taken
a serious turn for the worse...
...that's all. The end...will
come sooner than we expected..
perhaps at any time now. I
wanted you both to know this,
so we could all prepare ourselves.

There is a moment of silence. Then, REGINA rises, and embraces ANTOINETTE.

REGINA
That was very, very thoughtful
of you, dear.

INT. SERVANTS QUARTERS
LIBBY (the Irish cook) and the security GUARD watch, as DR. MEECHAM and the NURSE treat the badly battered Duarde BROTHER. LIBBY turns to the GUARD, menacingly.

LIBBY
Animal! I hope Mr. Duarde
twists your ears off.

DR. MEECHAM
All right, Libby.

LIBBY
(under her breath)
Ya big lug.

LOUIS bursts into the room, followed by the SECURITY CHIEF.

LIBBY
(pointing)
He did it, Mr. Duarde.

DR. MEECHAM
Libby.

LIBBY
Kill the bum.

DR. MEECHAM
That's enough.

There is silence, as LOUIS moves slowly to his brother's side. Suddenly, he grabs his BROTHER by the collar, and slaps him viciously across the face.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
What the hell are you doing
here, you son of a bitch!

DR. MEECHAM tries to restrain LOUIS, reminding him that the man is injured. LOUIS tells him he doesn't give a damn, and continues his barrage of curses. The others watch, stunned, as the two brothers shout insults at each other in ITALIAN. Again, Louis lunges for his brother, and has to be physically restrained.

LOUIS
Get him out of here! I
want that son of a bitch
out! I'll kill him.

DR. MEECHAM
For Christ sakes, Louis.
He's your brother!

LOUIS
Not my brother! Not any
more! He's forbidden in
my house. Ever! He knows
that. He's trying to ruin
me. He's filth! Nothing!
All of them! Filth!

Again the TWO MEN exchange angry insults in ITALIAN. DR. MEECHAM manages to pull LOUIS aside, out of ear shot of the others.

DR. MEECHAM
Louis. Calm down for a
second, and just listen
to me.

LOUIS
(a heated whisper)
For God sakes, Jules, you
know the arrangement. I
live here with Regina, as
long as no member of my
family ever set foot in this
house. That was the condition!
I signed the paper! I could
lose everything!

DR. MEECHAM
(soto voce)
Louis, will you stop. You're
not thinking...Nettie is dead.
There is no arrangement now.
No conditions. You can do
whatever the hell you please.
...You're in charge here.

LOUIS takes a moment, letting this sink in.

LOUIS
...What about the paper?

DR. MEECHAM
Don't worry about the damn
paper. I know where it is.
It's yours. You make your
own rules now.

The truth of DR. MEECHAM'S words gradually dawns
on LOUIS.

LOUIS
(with swelling
confidence)
Yes...Of course...I
make the rules.

Fully composed now, LOUIS moves once again to his
BROTHER.

BROTHER
(in Italian)
Stay away from me, you
bastard. Touch me again,
I swear to God, I'll sue!
I have witnesses.

LOUIS extends his arms to his BROTHER.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Antonio. I beg your
forgiveness, my brother.
It's been so long...I
don't know what came over
me...

BROTHER
(in Italian)
You're out of your head!
Crazy!

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Please...Give me a chance.
Let me make it up to you, my
brother. I am honored to
have you in my house. You
are welcome for as long as
you like...Tell me you will
stay, Antonio. Please.

The BROTHER hesitates for a long moment, then,

BROTHER
(in Italian)
...All right. I will stay.

The TWO MEN embrace each other enthusiastically.

LIBBY
(shaking her head)
Off their rockers...the lot
of them.

LOUIS
(expansive)
Libby, The scotch. Bring
the scotch. The best in
the house.

DR. MEECHAM
Now you're talking sense.

LOUIS
It's a time for celebration.
We must drink to the arrival
of my own dear brother...
Anthony Duarde.

The TWO MEN embrace again, chattering excitedly in
ITALIAN. LIBBY starts out of the room, mumbling to
herself.

LIBBY
All of 'em...Crazy as loons.

INT. BASEMENT STUDY - MR. BRENNER AND BUFFY
MR. BRENNER holds BUFFY by the arm. She is in tears.

MR. BRENNER
All right, young lady. No more
beatin' around the bush. I want
a straight answer, and I want
it now. Did you...Did you have
relations with your sister's
husband?

BUFFY
...Daddy...Please...

MR. BRENNER
Answer me, dammit! Did you!
Are you pregnant with his baby!

BUFFY
...Yes! I did it! I went to
bed with him! I'm pregnant...
Are you happy now!

MR. BRENNER
(trembling with rage)
God damn...How dare you...
(exploding)
Tramp! You little tramp!

MRS. BRENNER (O.S)
Snooks, please! Open
the door and let us in!
I'm her mother, Snooks!
My God, they can hear you
all over the house!

He raises a hand to strike her, checks himself, turns and walks toward the door..

INT. BASEMENT - MRS. BRENNER, ELEANOR, CANDICE AND DAVID huddled around the door to the STUDY.

MRS. BRENNER (CONT'D)
Say something, David. For
Lord sakes, talk to him!

DAVID RUTELEDGE steps up to the door, summoning his most authoritative voice.

DAVID
Snooks...This is David speaking.

INT. STUDY
as MR. BRENNER flings open the door, glaring at DAVID, then stepping aside as the others rush into the room.
MRS. BRENNER goes immediately to BUFFY, embracing her.

MR. BRENNER
If you didn't already hear it...
Your daughter's pregnant.

The FAMILY reacts: MRS. BRENNER cries. DAVID RUTELEDGE prays.

DAVID
Sweet Lord Jesus. Hear us
now in this hour of sadness
and shame.

MR. BRENNER
Dammit, David, shut up. It's
a little late for that.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh my God. My baby.

BUFFY
I'm not your baby, mother.

MR. BRENNER

That's enough! I don't want to hear another word outta you, young lady. You know what you've done? You have any idea what this means? To your sister? To all of us?... Crap!

ELEANOR

What are you going to do, Snooks?

MR. BRENNER

What the hell can I do? If she's going to have his goddamn baby, I'm sure as hell not going to let him marry my other daughter.

MRS. BRENNER

Please, Snooks!

MR. BRENNER

What, please?

ELEANOR

But they're already married, Snooks.

CANDICE

It's not valid. The marriage vows were violated.

MRS. BRENNER

Candice, just shush! This doesn't concern you.

MR. BRENNER

She's right, Susan Anne. You don't lie about something like this. It's too damn big. The marriage has to be annulled.

MRS. BRENNER

No! You can't, Snooks. I won't let you. Please! My God, what will the Goddards think?

MR. BRENNER

The Goddards? What the hell do they have to do with it!

MRS. BRENNER

The Duardes! I'm talking about the Duardes!

MR. BRENNER

To hell with the Duardes! I don't give a damn what they think. That punk son of theirs started this whole mess. Little bastard. Foolin around before he's even left on his honeymoon!

MRS. BRENNER

Oh, Lord, help me...

MR. BRENNER

Now don't start with the crying, Susan Anne. You know how I feel about--

MRS. BRENNER

(desperate)

Snooks, please...Please! Think of our friends. Mr. Lilly's running a front page feature in the Star. Everyone in town knows about the wedding. My God, we'll be laughed out of Louisville.

MR. BRENNER

All right now, just calm down. I'll handle it, Susan Anne. Don't worry...Look, we'll go away for a month or two. Wait till it all blows over--

MRS. BRENNER

I can't go away!

MR. BRENNER

What're you talkin about? Whatta you mean, you can't?

MRS. BRENNER
Snooks...I promised Aunt Emma
I'd visit her in two weeks.

MR. BRENNER
So?...Make it another time.
Tell her, something came up.

MRS. BRENNER
No!...I can't do that!

MR. BRENNER throws up his hands in frustration.

MR. BRENNER
Jesus H. Christ! What're
we talkin about here? I
mean, what are we talking
about, Susan Anne! We don't
have any other choice in the
matter!

ELEANOR
What about an abortion?

MR. BRENNER
Huhh?

MRS. BRENNER
That's right! Yes, of course!

CANDICE
(jumping to her
feet)
I can't believe what I'm hearing!
You're talking about murder now.
My own family.

ELEANOR
Be reasonable, honey. This is
the twentieth century. It's
done everyday.

CANDICE
It's a sin! An ugly, vile sin!
David, don't just sit there.
Say something!

DAVID
Well...the Church's position on
abortion...is clearly on the
side of the unborn--

CANDICE
Abortion is the sword of
the devil!

ELEANOR
It's a possibility. That's
all I'm saying.

MRS. BRENNER
I'll do it! I'll try anything!

CANDICE
Susan Anne Ruteledge Brenner,
bite your tongue!

MR. BRENNER
All right! Can it, Candice!

ELEANOR
(to Buffy)
How far along are you, honey?

BUFFY
...Almost four months.

ELEANOR
That's no good. It won't work.
Four months is too late.

MRS. BRENNER
Are you sure, Eleanor?

ELEANOR
Positive. No doctor would
risk it, believe me.

CANDICE
Praise the Lord.

MR. BRENNER
Wait a minute. All of you.
Just hold your horses. We're
going to check this out.

MR. BRENNER goes to the INTERCOM.

MRS. BRENNER
What are you doing, Snooks?

MR. BRENNER
I want a professional opinion.

He pushes a button on the INTERCOM.

MR. BRENNER
(into intercom)
Hello. Who is this? Oh yeah,
Randolph. Uh...Listen, Randolph,
this is Snooks Brenner. I'm in
a meeting downstairs in the
study, and I want you to get
that Dr...what's his name..
Meecham down here, as quick as
you can...That's right. It's
very urgent..Thanks.

MRS. BRENNER
(alarmed)
Snooks, Dr. Meecham is the
Duardes' family doctor.

MR. BRENNER
I know that.

MRS. BRENNER
We can't let him in on this.
He'll blab it to everyone.

MR. BRENNER
Will you just relax, Susan Anne.
Doctors don't blab. They're
sworn to secrecy. They take
an oath on it. Just like a
priest.

CANDICE
Well I want to go on record to
protest any further--

MR. BRENNER
Candice, you're already on the
record, so just clam up!

BUFFY
Don't I have anything to say
about this?

MR. BRENNER
No! You sure as hell don't.

BUFFY
It's my baby!

MR. BRENNER
Not any more, young lady!

INT. MAIN ROOM

We sense the growing atmosphere of expectation, as SERVANTS distribute packets of white rose petals, to the GUESTS (to throw at the bride and groom). During this, a very nervous CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT stealthily descends the staircase into the main room.

RITA circulates among the guests, bewildered, as she futilely tries to locate the parents and family members of the bride and groom.

LOUIS enters with his BROTHER, whose wounds are now neatly bandaged. RITA rushes over to him.

RITA
Thank goodness, Mr. Duarde.
I was beginning to think
everyone had abandoned me.

LOUIS
Never, Rita. I was just
welcoming a very unexpected
guest. Rita, I want you to
meet my own...my dear, little
brother, Antonio Duarde. All
the way from Italy.

RITA
Oh, what a lovely surprise.
I'm delighted to see you,
Antonio. Welcome.

LOUIS

He doesn't speak much English, but he's very happy to be here. And I am very honored to have him in my house, at last.

RITA

Yes, of course. I can see that.

(noticing bandages)

...Is he all right?

LOUIS

Oh, yes. An unfortunate accident, I'm afraid. Nothing serious.

RITA

Oh, that's lovely...You haven't by chance seen any of the Brenners, have you? I've been looking all over for them.

LOUIS

No...Now wait a minute, yes. I believe Mr. Brenner had some kind of family business to attend to.

RITA

Oh, I do hope it won't be much longer. The children should be leaving at any time now. It would be tragic if they weren't here for the send-off.

LOUIS

I'm sure they will be, Rita. Don't give it a second thought.

RITA

You're right, of course. It's going to be lovely...Let me get you both your rose petals.

LOUIS

...Splendid.

RITA scurries off.

INT. BASEMENT STUDY - MR. AND MRS. BRENNER, ELEANOR, DAVID AND CANDICE, BUFFY, DR. MEECHAM.

DR. MEECHAM (a bit muddled by drink now) seems deep in thought. The OTHERS wait, in silence. Finally,

MR. BRENNER
What about it, Doc?

DR. MEECHAM
Hmm? What about what?

MR. BRENNER
The abortion. Can it be done?
Or not?

CANDICE starts to protest, but MR. BRENNER silences her instantly.

MR. BRENNER (CONT'D)
Not a word, Candice, or out!
I mean it.

DR. MEECHAM
Of course it can be done.

ELEANOR
Dr. Meecham, are you sure?
I mean, isn't it too late?

DR. MEECHAM
Quite sure. Never too late.

ELEANOR
But I thought it was very
dangerous to--

MR. BRENNER
Elie, for Chrissakes, Dr. Meecham
is a trained physician in these
matters.

ELEANOR
I'm sure Dr. Meecham is
extremely capable, Snooks,
and I certainly meant no
offense. It's just that--

DR. MEECHAM

Of course, you didn't, dear.

(looking around)

Where the hell did I leave
my stethoscope?

BUFFY

It's around your neck.

DR. MEECHAM

(discovering it)

I'll be damned.

The FAMILY MEMBERS exchange worried looks, as DR.
MEECHAM puts the stethoscope in his bag.

ELEANOR

Excuse me, Dr. Meecham, but
it's always been my under-
standing that any abortion
done after the first
trimester, was considerably
more dangerous to the
mother.

DR. MEECHAM

Good for you. You sound like
you know what you're talking
about.

MR. BRENNER

Now wait a minute. Wait just
a minute here. Doctor, are
you telling me that this
abortion would be dangerous
for my daughter?

DR. MEECHAM

Absolutely.

MR. BRENNER

Well why the hell didn't you
say something before now!

DR. MEECHAM

I don't recall you asking.

MR. BRENNER
Jesus Christ, what the hell
kind of a doctor are you,
anyway!

DR. MEECHAM
Overworked, sir.

MR. BRENNER explodes, profanely, but ELEANOR intercedes.

ELEANOR
Snooks, please. It's all
right.
(then)
Dr. Meecham, thank you very
much for coming down here.
You've been most gracious.
However, I don't think we'll
be needing your services any
longer.

DR. MEECHAM
Understandably, madame...
Always glad to be of help.
(kissing Buffy on
the forehead)
Congratulations, dear.
Have yourself a healthy
baby.

DR. MEECHAM, bag in hand, goes to the door.

MR. BRENNER
Doc. Remember your oath now.
You said I could trust you.
Not a word of this to anyone.

DR. MEECHAM
(a three finger salute)
Scout's honor.

He exits.

MR. BRENNER

How do you like that guy!
Goddamn quack. They're all
alike...Well, we're right
back where we started.
There's only one way to
settle this mess.

MRS. BRENNER

Snooks, I beg you. No
annulment.

MR. BRENNER

Susan Anne--

MRS. BRENNER

Now listen to me. That punk
kid of theirs fathered this
child. So, number one. No
way is he gonna marry Muffin.
And number two...Like it or
not, it's his responsibility.
Yeah, she's gonna have the
baby. But he's gonna marry
her, too!

BUFFY

(jumping to her feet)
Oh no he isn't! I will not
marry Dino! For you, or
anyone else!

MR. BRENNER

You'll do what I tell you!

BUFFY

No I won't! Not this time!
...I don't even know if this
is his baby!

A moment of suspended animation, then, FAMILY MEMBERS
react.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

That's right! There've been
lots of others besides Dino!
It could be anyone's!

With a cry, MRS. BRENNER slumps down in a chair.
DAVID and CANDICE rush to her. ELEANOR holds her
head. MR. BRENNER advances menacingly towards BUFFY.

MR. BRENNER
...Others?

BUFFY
(meeting his gaze)
That's right, daddy.

MR. BRENNER
How many? Five? Ten?

BUFFY
Lots more, daddy! Lots!

MRS. BRENNER
Stop it, Buffy!

BUFFY
Why, mother? He knows I'm
a tramp. He told me so.
Right, daddy?

MR. BRENNER
(trembling)
Twenty?

BUFFY
At least! Maybe thirty.
Maybe forty. Who knows!
Who keeps count!

MRS. BRENNER
That's enough, Buffy!

BUFFY
I've slept with half the guys
at the Academy! And I loved
every minute of it! It was
warm! And it felt good!...
God, it felt good!

BUFFY sobs convulsively. MR. BPENNER is speechless.
ELEANOR embraces BUFFY, comforting her. MRS. BRENNER,
likewise.

ELEANOR

There, there, honey. It's all right. It's going to be all right.

(to Snooks)

This has gone far enough now. She can't take any more of this badgering.

MRS. BRENNER

Buffy, darling. Oh, sweetheart, we love you so much...Oh my God, Snooks. What're we going to do?

MR. BRENNER

(with icy calm)

We don't have to do Jack shit, now. There's no problem any more...

(toward Buffy)

If she's been sleepin around with every Tom, Dick and Harry, who's to say it's Dino's baby" Nobody, that's who. So... End of problem.

MRS. BRENNER

(embracing Buffy)

Oh, yes. It doesn't matter anyway. She's our baby. Our little Buffy. She didn't mean those things she said. She's just scared and upset. Aren't you honey.

ELEANOR

(to Snooks)

Why don't you both kiss and make up now. We're a family, and we all love each other. We have to stick together.

MRS. BRENNER

That's right, Elie...We'll work it out as a family.

(to Snooks)

Come on, hon. Tell Buffy you love her. She feels so bad.

MR. BRENNER
...She knows that.

MRS. BRENNER
(to Buffy)
You hear that, sweetie? Your
daddy loves you. We all do...
Come on, now. Happy smile...
Give daddy some sugar.

BUFFY
(after a moment)
...Daddy?...You want your
sugar?

MR. BRENNER
(after careful consideration)
Maybe later.

MR. BRENNER heads for the door.

INT. MAIN ROOM
Buzzing with anticipation. The GUESTS, armed with
packets of ROSE PETALS, anxiously await the "big
moment".

JIM HABOR and AMY are the only ones still dancing.

Suddenly, SHELBY MUNKER rushes in from the hallway,
shouting excitedly.

SHELBY
They're leaving! Hurry, everyone!

The GUESTS make a mad rush to the HALLWAY. The ORCHESTRA
finishes its last number, but JIM HABOR and AMY continue
to hold each other.

AMY
I won't forget you.

JIM
If you ever need anything,
you know who to call. You're
family now.

INT. HALLWAY

CLARICE, ANTOINETTE and REGINA are swept along with
the OTHERS to the MAIN ENTRY.

EXT. MANSION DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The WHITE MUSTANG, with horn honking, wheels around
the front terrace-way in a tight circle, then, under
a deluge of "rose petals" and congratulatory cheers,
guns down the driveway and into the street, dragging
STRINGS OF TIN CANS on the pavement behind, as it
speeds off.

INT. MAIN ENTRY - FRONT DOOR

As the GUESTS applaud and shout their final "goodbyes",
the BRENNER FAMILY arrives, just in time to see the
CAR disappear into the darkness. (Their reactions to
missing the "climax" of the reception are varied).

LOUIS and REGINA say goodbye to their GUESTS. During
this,

MACKENZIE and MRS. BRENNER will find a moment to share
their last, intimate eye contact.

KATHY SPAR, now inexplicably enjoying herself, will ask
her mother (ELEANOR) for permission to stay awhile
longer. ELEANOR agrees.

A sheepish CAPT. REEDLEY ENSTEDT will gratefully accept
a ride from the BRENNERS.

LOUIS will whisper an invitation to ANTOINETTE and
MACKENZIE to stay on for a small, intimate family supper.

The TWO FAMILIES say goodbye to each other. The feeling here is strained but cordial. All seem to agree, for the moment at least, that the wedding was a great success.

The BRENNERS finally depart in two limousines. (CAR #1: MR. AND MRS. Brenner, Buffy, Eleanor and Hugh Brenner. CAR #2: Candice and David Ruteledge, Capt. Enstedt, Ruthie and Russell Gerasch.)

CLARICE comments on Mr. Brenner's less than gracious goodbye. But LOUIS is in a magnanimous mood, and doesn't want to hear any more about the Brenners. With his arm around ANTONIO (brother), he announces, "It's a time for family celebration.", and all are invited to the basement for a quiet supper. RITA will join them as soon as she finishes dismissing the "help".

Off to the side, ANTOINETTE is giving MACKENZIE a piece of her mind. He takes it, finally walking away like a big puppy with his tail between his legs. LOUIS goes over and puts his arm around her.

LOUIS

What's wrong, dear Tony? Has our Mac been misbehaving?

ANTOINETTE

Oh Louis, you know perfectly well what he's been doing. His flirtations are so obvious it's embarrassing. The fool.

LOUIS

(making light of it)
Oh, that. My dear Tony. You're much too lovely to be jealous of anyone. I can promise you he meant nothing by it. Probably just the champagne.

ANTOINETTE

Jealousy is hardly the question here, Louis. Of course he meant nothing by it. He never does, that's the point. It's just this silly adolescent obsession of his that he simply refuses to control. It's the same thing over and over again. Every party we attend.

LOUIS

(genuinely surprised)
Really? My goodness, I wasn't aware of that.

ANTOINETTE

It's totally predictable. He always picks out the most unlikely, unattractive woman, then proceeds to seduce her into meeting him somewhere for a romantic interlude. Of course, he has absolutely no intention of ever seeing it through. It's just his little game. He's such a child.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRENNER LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

MR. AND MRS. BRENNER, ELEANOR, BUFFY AND HUGH driving in silence...the only sound coming from HUGH BRENNER who is humming his favorite song as he looks out the window. Finally,

MR. BRENNER

(irritated)

Hughie. Knock it off, will ya.

HUGH

....What am I doing?

MRS. BRENNER signals him to be quiet....More silence...
Then,

HUGH

Why is everyone so down?
Isn't this supposed to be
a happy occasion?

MRS. BRENNER

Honey, it's been a very long
day for everyone. We're
just tired. That's all.

HUGH

I'm not.

ELEANOR

Weddings are always hardest on
the parents, Hughie. You'll
understand that better when
you have children of your own.

HUGH

Well I don't see why you should
feel bad. I mean, they're
going to be living practically
next door to us.

MR. BRENNER clears his throat laboriously.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Besides, it probably won't be
long before you have your
first grandchild.

MRS. BRENNER

(jumping in)

Hughie. I really want you to
try and get some rest, dear.
You've had a lot of excitement
today.

HUGH

What?!

MRS. BRENNER

Please, Hughie. For me. Just
to be on the safe side.

HUGH
That's ridiculou---

MRS. BRENNER
You didn't forget to take
your pills, did you, dear?

HUGH
No, mother. Of course I
didn't forget. I took all
my pills, like a good little
boy.

MRS. BRENNER
All right, dear. Now just
try to get some rest. That's
all I'm asking.

HUGH
Mother, I feel fine.

MRS. BRENNER
I know, dear. Just do as
Momma says. It's for your
own good, Hughie.

HUGH
God almighty.

HUGH slumps down in his seat, totally frustrated.
MRS. BRENNER tries to placate him with a pat on the knee.

MRS. BRENNER
Thank you, darling.

Mr. Brenner squints through the windshield.

MR. BRENNER
What the hell is that?

In the distance, down the highway, a BALL OF FIRE
illuminates the sky.

MR. BRENNER (CONT'D)
An accident?

HUGH
Wow! Looks like a good one.

MR. BRENNER
Dammit. I knew we should've
stayed off the Interstate.

As their car draws nearer, the BALL OF FIRE becomes
a giant MUSHROOM OF FLAME, blinding in its intensity.

MR. BRENNER
Jesus Christ.

A HIGHWAY PATROLMAN waves the Brenner CARS to the
side of the road. When MR. BRENNER asks what happened,
the PATROLMAN informs him that a gasoline truck
collided with a Mustang. Instatly, MR. BRENNER jumps
out of his car, and runs after the patrolman, followed
closely by Hugh.

MR. BRENNER
Officer. What color Mustang?

PATROLMAN
Couldn't tell.

Other FAMILY MEMBERS rush over (Buffy, Eleanor, Mrs.
Brenner, David, Candice, Ruthie, Russel, Capt. Enstedt),
as MR. BRENNER and his SON push their way as close as
they can to the scene of the ACCIDENT, squinting into
the RAGING HOLOCAUST. There, on the pavement, some
twenty yards away, they see the tell tale smouldering
remains of the strands of TIN CANS. Their reactions
are extreme.

HUGH
Jesus, it's their car!
It's Muffin!

MRS. BRENNER runs forward, shrieking.



MRS. BRENNER
No! It's not! My God, no!
My baby! My muffin!

Hysterically fighting to break through the cordon of OFFICERS, MRS. BRENNER has to be physically restrained.

MRS. BRENNER
Oh God! She's dead! Muffin!
No! No! No!....

MRS. BRENNER collapses. BUFFY rushes to her, pushing aside the OFFICERS who are trying to help.

BUFFY
Leave her alone, dammit!
She's my mother! Get away!
Don't touch her!

MR. BRENNER is in a violent shouting match with the OFFICERS, demanding to get through the roadblock.

MR. BRENNER
You son of a bitch! That's
my daughter out there! I've
gotta get through! My wife
needs medical attention, for
Christ's sake!

The OFFICERS try to calm him and the other hysterical FAMILY MEMBERS, but they stand firm in their position. The highway is closed to all traffic. No exceptions!

RUSSELL (GERASCH) jumps blindly into the fray beside his employer with a show of unbridled loyalty that threatens to explode into physical violence. HUGH finally takes command of the situation, pouncing on RUSSELL and throwing him aside.

HUGH

That's enough, Russell!
Goddammit, I said enough!
Now cut it out! You're not
helping!..Get in the car!
Go on! Get in the goddamn
car!..Come on, dad. We've
gotta get mom back to the
house!.. Everybody! Get
in the cars!

HUGH orders DAVID and CAPT. ENSTEDT to carry his
mother to the car. They respond, carefully lifting
the semi-conscious woman.

MRS. BRENNER

(moaning)

She's gone. My baby's gone.
It's my fault. Oh, God. I
did it. I killed my baby.

HUGH

(shouting)

Dad! Come on! You're just
wasting time! Let's go!
Hurry!

The distraught FAMILY MEMBERS retreat from the scene,
running and stumbling back to their cars.

EXT. DUARDE MANSION - NIGHT

in shocking contrast to the previous scene, the serenely
lit, statuesque Duarde mansion.

EXT. ESTATE GROUNDS - ARIANNE, AMY, KATHY SPAR
having a wonderful time smoking pot. ARIANNE holds
an ornately carved wood "stash" box containing individual
parcels of her most treasured "herbs". She takes a long
pull on a joint, then hands it to KATHY.

KATHY

(taking a drag)

...Ooh, I love the flavor.
Tastes like home grown.

ARIANNE

Are you kidding? This is
Hawaiian...Puna...Very rare.
It's grown on the side of
a volcano.

KATHY

Far out.

ARIANNE

There's nothing like it in
the world...It's a total
upper. Primo grass...
By far, the most creative.

KATHY passes the joint to AMY.

KATHY
You ready to be baptized,
Amy?

AMY
(giggling)
Oh, God. I'm ready for
anything today...
(taking the joint)
Forgive me, Frankie, for
I know not what I do...

ARIANNE and KATHY proceed to instruct AMY on the
proper technique for maximum enjoyment of her first
"toke".

INT. BASEMENT STUDY
LOUIS, REGINA, ANTONIO, CLARICE, ANTOINETTE, MACKENZIE,
JIM HAVOR, RITA, RANDOLPH, DR. MEECHAM, VIOLINIST

RANDOLPH serves. The VIOLINIST plays. The dinner party
is in full swing. LOUIS (in Italian) urges his brother
to sing a song. ANTONIO, feeling no pain at the moment,
jumps to his feet, takes the tray from RANDOLPH, bursts
into a lusty Italian melody and proceeds to serve the
guests with great style, as the VIOLINIST accompanies
him. The FAMILY MEMBERS react accordingly. CLARICE,
ANTOINETTE and MACKENZIE are mortified. REGINA is
oblivious from morphine. DR. MEECHAM, is likewise,
from drink. LOUIS, JIM, RITA and RANDOLPH are the most
vociferous in their appreciation. LOUIS rises for a
toast.

LOUIS
In my country, they say that
the only true measure of a
man's wealth is the amount
of love that surrounds him.
As I look around at all your
faces tonight, I know that
I am the richest man in
the world.

The OTHERS applaud and voice their approval, except for
DR. MEECHAM, who sits, staring into his glass.

LOUIS (CONT'D)
A toast to you all, my dear
and precious family.
(then to Dr. Meecham)
Aren't you drinking, Jules?

DR. MEECHAM
(looking up)
As much as I possibly can,
Louis.

INT. MAIN ENTRY - NIGHT

The BRENNERS have just arrived en masse, and the ENTRY HALL is a scene of utter chaos as the FAMILY MEMBERS, in varying states of emotional upheaval, push their way past the Duarde butler (FRANK), scattering in different directions.

CANDICE, DAVID and RUTHIE run screaming for the NURSE.

HUGH, RUSSELL and CAPT. EMSTEDT carry the prostrate MRS. BRENNER.

MR. BRENNER demands to see LOUIS, and takes off down the hallway, followed by ELEANOR.

INT. BASEMENT STUDY
LOUIS is toasting RITA.

LOUIS
To the person most responsible
for making this, my son's
wedding day, a treasured
memory for us all.

Warm response and applause.
Suddenly, the door bursts open, and MR. BRENNER comes barging into the room, ELEANOR close at his heels. He orders DR. MEECHAM upstairs.

MR. BRENNER
Come on, doc, move it! My
wife's unconscious, for
Christ'sakes!

The DUARDES react to this intrusion with a mixture of alarm and indignation. DR. MEECHAM, bag in hand, lumbers out of the room. REGINA, lost in a morphine daze, wanders after him, commiserating over "poor Susan Anne".

MR. BRENNER

I hate to screw up your little party, but you see, Muffin and Dino were just killed in a highway accident.

Explosive EXCLAMATIONS of shock and disbelief. RITA covers her ears. The bombshell of news, however, does not penetrate REGINA'S foggy state, and as she passes ELEANOR on her way out,

REGINA

Do sit down, dear. There's oodles of food. We're going to cheer up Susan Anne.

REGINA glides out of the room. MR. BRENNER continues to assault his listeners with graphic details of the newlyweds' fiery death. LOUIS translates in Italian for his confused brother. Finally,

LOUIS

For God's sake, Snooks! Enough!

MR. BRENNER

I'm not through yet, buster. I've got plenty more to say to you, and you're going to listen!

ANTOINETTE

How dare you! How dare you do this, you insensitive--

MR. BRENNER

Shut up.

MACKENZIE

You will watch your tongue, sir.

MR. BRENNER
Sit down, fatso!

MACKENZIE does so, quickly:

ANOTHER ROOM

MRS. BRENNER, HUGH, DAVID AND CANDICE, the NURSE.
MRS. BRENNER stretched out on a sofa, moaning
incomprehensively. The NURSE applies a cold compress.
DAVID holds her hand, and prays over her. CANDICE
huddles against DAVID, sobbing. DR. MEECHAM shuffles
in and begins rummaging through his bag. REGINA,
close behind.

NURSE
You're going to be all right,
Mrs. Brenner. Dr. Meecham
is here now.

MRS. BRENNER
No! Please! My God, don't
let him touch me.

REGINA observes the histeria with compassionate
misunderstanding.

REGINA
Poor, dear Susan Anne. I
know. Believe me. It's
not easy, losing a daughter.
...But think how happy she
must be.

This sends MRS. BRENNER into renewed misery.

HUGH
Mom, please. You've gotta
calm down.

MRS. BRENNER
I did it. It's my fault.
I killed my baby...Oh God,
forgive me.

HUGH and the NURSE try to calm her. DAVID continues to pray for "divine and healing grace".

REGINA

Dear Susan Anne, you mustn't blame yourself. Once the children made up their minds, nothing we could have said would have changed it.

CANDICE

(to Regina)

My God! Don't you have feelings? Don't you care? How can you be drunk at a time like this! You should fall on your knees and beg forgiveness!

DAVID

Charity, Candice. Charity.

REGINA

My goodness, Candice, you're upset too. Now that's just silly, dear.

CANDICE

(shrieking)

I can't stand it! Go away! Get away from us! You drunken.....sinner!

At this moment, DR. MEECHAM jabs a NEEDLE into CANDICE'S arm.

DR. MEECHAM

This will help.

CANDICE

What are you doing!

NURSE

(alarmed)

Doctor, that's the wrong--

CANDICE screams, and slumps to the floor in a faint.
DAVID goes berserk.

DAVID
Sweet Jesus, what've you done
to her! You charleton!

DR. MEECHAM
She's not allergic, is she?

The NURSE and HUGH try to restore calm. HUGH finally
runs off, calling out to his father.

OUTSIDE - ARIANNE, KATHY, AMY
"high" as kites, and loving every minute of it. KATHY
instructs AMY in the proper method of rolling a joint.

INT. BASEMENT STUDY
MR. BRENNER at his abusive best. LOUIS steps in.

LOUIS
Stop it, Snooks! This instant!
You're not alone in this tragedy,
for God's sake! My son is dead!

MR. BRENNER
Listen you son of a bitch, don't--

LOUIS
(exploding)
I'm warning you, Snooks!
You are a guest in this house!
If you can't conduct yourself
in a civilized manner, then
get out!

MR. BRENNER
You bastard! My daughter
burned to death tonight,
because of your drunken son!
So don't talk to me about
being civilized!

CLARICE

Animal! That's what you
are! Disgusting, low bred
animal!

MR. BRENNER

And don't give me any of
that guest crap. Remember,
I'm the guy that paid for
this goddamn wedding! Every
last cent of it!

OUTRAGED REACTIONS...HUGH BRENNER enters in a rush.

HUGH

Dad, you better come upstairs.
Things are really getting out
of hand.

MR. BRENNER

That's right! Twenty thousand,
hard cash! For all you free
loaders!

HUGH

Dad, you're needed upstairs! .

JIM

That's all right...I'll go.

JIM HAVOR weaves his way out of the room.

ANTOINETTE

If that proves to be true,
Mr. Brenner, and personally
I have my doubts, rest assured
you will be fully reimbursed.
Our family is not in the habit
of accepting contributions
from...truckdrivers.

ELEANOR

He owns a truck stop, honey!
And you better watch your
fuckin lip!

MR. BRENNER

You phony bastards, with
your servants and your
bullshit manners! I can
buy and sell the whole lot
of you! I gross five
million a year from that
truck stop! Five million!

HUGH

Dad, will you stop--

MR. BRENNER

(to Hugh)

Stay out of this!

ANTOINETTE

Mr. Brenner, my family is
not impressed--

MR. BRENNER

Your family is a bunch of
thoroughbred fakos! I
don't think any one of you
has a pot to piss in;

LOUIS, between exclamation, continues to translate the
confrontation for his BROTHER.

CLARICE

You scum. It'll take a
lot more than your filthy
money to buy you respectability!

ELEANOR

Another crack like that, honey,
and I'll change your goddamn
profile!

LOUIS

Stop it! All of you! It
doesn't matter! None of
this! My God, our children
are dead!

ANTOINETTE

Mr. Brenner! My family happens to be the most prominent third generation--

MR. BRENNER

Oh, bullshit! You don't even own this goddamn house! Your mother does! I know! And you keep her locked up in a closet somewhere, so nobody can see her!

CLARICE

(jumping to her feet)
You slime! Have you no shame?! Our mother died in this house today!

RITA, hearing this news for the first time, becomes hysterical, and runs from the room, shrieking.

RITA

No! Don't tell me! Not that! Oh! Oh! It's too much!

Suddenly, ANTOINETTE screams! HUGH has her by the arm, and, with his head shaking and eyes blinking, he spits repeatedly in her face. He is in the throes of a Jacksonian epileptic seizure, which she misreads completely.

ANTOINETTE

Stop that! Stop it, I say! What are you doing?! How dare you!

She tries to pull away from him. ELEANOR rushes over.

ELEANOR

Leave him alone, you idiot. He's having a seizure. Haven't you ever seen an epileptic!

ELEANOR eases HUGH into a chair. CLARICE cries out.

CLARICE
My God! I can't stand
any more of this! I
can't.

She runs from the room, screaming.

EXT. GROUNDS - NIGHT - ARIANNE, KATHY, AMY
dancing to their own music. JIM HAVOR staggers up,
and attempts to relate the news of the tragedy. His
slurred speech, however, merely triggers gales of
laughter from the girls. Finally, JIM gives up, and
joins the party.

INT. HOUSE

The NURSE, assisted now by LIBBY and her son, EDWARD (CLINTON), try to bring some semblance of order and calm to the most distraught FAMILY MEMBERS (MRS. BRENNER, CANDICE, and the previously forgotten SHELBY MUNKER, who is shattered by her best friend's death.

UPSTAIRS

CLARICE runs up the stairs, her hands clasped over her ears.

CLARICE

No more. I can't take any more...In my own house. Madness.

Desperately seeking refuge, she throws open the first door she comes to...only to find,

RITA, on the bed, crying. RITA frantically waves her away.

RITA

Please. Go away. Whatever it is, I don't want to know about it. Don't tell me anything! I beg you.

CLARICE slams the door, and continues down the hall mumbling to herself.

CLARICE

My God, it's everywhere. Everywhere. I can't take any more.

She opens the door to Arianne's room, and is greeted by MAE HELLSTROM.

MAE

...Hello.

CLARICE
You! What are you doing
here?!

MAE
Well, actually, I've been
hallucinating. But I'm
much better now. What
on earth is goin--

CLARICE slams the door in her face, continuing down
the hall.

CLARICE
Enough! I've had enough!
Randolph! Someone! Help
me!

As she reaches DINO'S ROOM, the door opens, and DINO
appears, dressed in a bathrobe, and looking very green
around the gills. CLARICE, stunned by this apparition,
stops dead in her tracks, then begins screaming..

CLARICE
You! My God, it's you!
You came back! You're alive!

CLARICE embraces her confused nephew. He tries to
explain that he never left..must have passed out for
awhile...

CLARICE drags him to the staircase, screaming the good
tidings to the others.

As DINO descends the stairs into the main hall, the
room explodes with exclamations of shock, and cries of
relief. CLARICE hysterically relates the news to
the others.

CLARICE
It wasn't him! He never
left. He's been here
all the time!

Individual reactions, embraces, questions...Then, from
the BRENNER clan,

HUGH
My sister! What about
Muffin? Is she here?

DINO
Yeah. She should be.
Someplace.

HUGH bounds up the stairs, screaming for his sister.
DAVID, shouting praises to the Lord, runs to tell the
others in the basement. MRS. BRENNER is beside herself.
DINO, completely bewildered, turns to his mother.

DINO
What's going on, mom?
Why is everybody so
excited?

REGINA
(embracing him dreamily)
They missed you, darling.
I'm so glad you decided
to come home.

The pandemonium mushrooms as the OTHERS rush in.
LOUIS embraces his son.

HUGH appears at the head of the staircase with MUFFIN.
She runs down the stairs and throws herself in MR.
BRENNER'S arms. The room reverberates with happy cries...
"The Children are safe" "It wasn't them" "They never
left the house" "Praise the Lord."

MUFFIN, eyes red from crying, tries to relate how she
ran to her room and locked the door, after she found
Dino in the shower with--, but nobody hears or really
cares...They're just so overjoyed to see her.

Amidst the celebration, other questions arise. "Who was in the car?" "Who else could have taken it?"

LOUIS
(as it dawns on him)
My God. Tony and Tracy.
I gave him the keys. It
must have been them.

Individual expressions of alarm and sadness are fleeting at best. "I can't believe they'd do something like that." "What a shame. Both of them so young" "She was always such a dear girl." "Awful. Just awful." "Thank goodness. It must have been over quickly. That's a blessing." "Isn't it fortunate Tony's parents are out of the country." "The important thing is that the children are safe." This last, a universal sentiment at the moment. LOUIS seems disturbed as he moves among the joyous throng. He goes to his wife.

LOUIS
Regina. Don't you think
we should call the Farrells?
They have a right to know.

REGINA
Oh, Louis, not now. We
mustn't. They'll find
out soon enough. But
not tonight. Let them
rest. It's such a
happy time.

Joy abounds, as members of both families maul the newlyweds, smothering them with hugs and kisses.

DAVID is on his knees, in grateful prayer. MAE and RITA have joined the celebration. MRS. BRENNER becomes hysterical with laughter.

CAPT. ENSTEDT repeatedly tries to proclaim his innocence of any wrongdoing to MR. BRENNER, who hasn't the slightest idea what he is talking about, and could care less. ARIANNE, KATHY and AMY enter from outside, along with JIM HAVOR, all delighted with the high festivities. ANTONIO, understanding nothing, but having the time of his life, hugs and kisses every female in sight.

LOUIS makes his way toward the staircase.

The celebration and sudden release of tension gradually snowballs into an insane bacchanal, with men and women crying, dancing, embracing, rolling on the floor, laughing out of control and generally disintegrating into total madness.

CLARICE and RANDOLPH, locked in a passionate embrace, blatantly caress each other.

MR. BRENNER and BUFFY share their most luxurious 'sugar' embrace.

MR. BRENNER
You're gonna have that baby,
princess. And we'll raise
him just like he was one of
our own.

BUFFY smiles. triumphantly, clinging ever harder to her father.

REGINA, in dreamy delirium, embraces ARIANNE.

REGINA
This is your day, darling.
My beautiful, beautiful
bride.

DR. MEECHAM has MAE pinned against the wall. She smiles at him, twinkling.

MAE

I'd love to spend the
night with you, doctor.
But what about your
practice?

DR. MEECHAM

(gesturing around him)
Madame...This is my
practice.

INT. NETTIE'S BEDROOM

LOUIS enters, and walks slowly to the bed, looking
down at the lifeless form of his mother-in-law. We
hear the sounds of the raucous celebration downstairs.

LOUIS

Well, old lady. I didn't
forget you. Not after all
this time. Twenty two years.
In service. Obedient service.
I think even you would agree
with that. I knew the rules.
And I lived up to the bargain.
Now. Things have changed.
No more rules. No conditions.
I'm in charge. I make all
the choices. Just as you
promised. But...As I see
it, my work is completed.
Your children are secure.
My son is married. My wife...
Well...Regina has Jules.
He'll see that she's happy...
There's nothing really left
here for me to do. So...
I've decided to take my
leave.....Salute.

LOUIS bows, and walks out of the room.

DOWNSTAIRS

LOUIS descends the stairs. The celebration is at
its peak. As he crosses the great hall, he calls out
to his brother.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Antonio! Are you coming
with me?

ANTONIO
(in Italian)
What? Where are you going?

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Rome.

ANTONIO
(in Italian)
What are you talking about?
Are you crazy?

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Perhaps.

ANTONIO
(in Italian)
What about me? I like
it here.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Then stay. You are welcome.

ANTONIO runs after his brother, as LOUIS exits the
main hall.

ANTONIO
(in Italian)
Wait a minute! You can't
leave me here. Bastard!

LOUIS strides down the hallway into the main entry.
ANTONIO races to catch up.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
(in Italian)
What the hell is in Rome?
Tell me what the hell is in Rome!

LOUIS walks out of the house, and into the driveway, heading towards his little sports car. ANTONIO follows.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
I don't know yet.
Maybe family.

ANTONIO
(in Italian)
It doesn't make any
sense. It's insane.

LOUIS
(in Italian)
Shut up. Just get in
the car.

ANTONIO hops in beside LOUIS, who guns the engine, then wheels the car down the long driveway, until its tail lights disappear into the darkness.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

We see the little sports car racing toward us, and can hear LOUIS and ANTONIO singing at the top of their voices. As it zooms past us down the highway, the gasoline stains on the pavement, and small pieces of twisted metal and debris by the side of the road will tell us where we are.

THE END

NOTE:

Over the END CREDITS we will see the complete 16mm wedding reception highlights, as photographed by our FILMMAKERS.